

First Call for Children

'The essential needs of children should be given priority in bad times as well as good' — Plan of Action, World Summit for Children

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GOALS ARE STILL ELUSIVE

Focus sharpens on structural impediments to women's gains

Women in the developing world, despite widespread official commitment over the past 20 years to improved opportunities for them, have made only limited gains in health, education and economic and social participation, according to UN data. In addition, the high level of disadvantage from which most start, combined with the severe effects on national economies of plunging commodity prices and the impact on the poor of structural adjustment policies, have offset most of their advances.

The world has long known and publicly lamented the low social and economic status of women that makes them vulnerable to social, environmental and political stresses. Yet the socio-economic structures and relationships responsible have proved resistant to change.

As a result, while most women in the developing world struggle to provide for their families, under greater poverty and with fewer resources, they also continue to bear the additional burden of what *The State of the World's Children*

1992 report called 'the apartheid of gender', their contributions undervalued and much of their potential thwarted.

According to AGNES AKOSUA AIDOO, UNICEF adviser on women, along with its efforts to improve women's health, education and income opportunities, UNICEF is working to help bring about change in such strategic areas as the formulation of national policies, women's social and legal status, participation, decision-making capacity and the role of men. In the following interview, she describes the UNICEF strategic approach to reducing destructive gender disparities.

What are some of the approaches UNICEF is taking on what you term the 'strategic' issues, the national policies affecting women and their legal status, for example?

Effective national policies must be based on accurate information and data on the situation that needs to be changed. Thus support for research and study of women's issues has become an

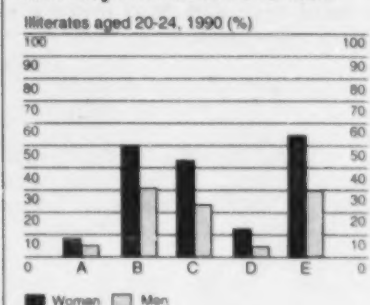
important part of our work. We are collecting data on women starting from childhood — on health, education, social and legal status and in the work force — to help substantiate what has been observed generally for women's disadvantaged position. From the analysis of such data from a gender perspective, policy options can be proposed.

What is some of the research and why is it significant?

In Egypt we supported a study by a major statistical office on the specifics of women's participation in the labour force. Unlike Egyptian census data which reflected participation only in the formal sector public and private wage employment, it measured participation in both the formal and informal (usually self-employment) sectors. The Egyptian census showed women's participation in the economy increasing only from 7 per cent to 10 per cent between 1975 and 1986, while the new research showed an increase from 7 percent to 37 percent.

With such a measurement, we can

Illiteracy in Women and Men



Legend: ■ Women □ Men
A Latin America and Caribbean
B Sub-Saharan Africa
C Northern Africa and western Asia
D Eastern and south-eastern Asia
E Southern Asia

* Includes Sudan, excludes South Africa
* Includes Somalia and Mauritania, excludes Cyprus, Israel and Turkey

"Despite broad progress towards literacy, a huge historical deficit of literacy remains among today's adult women, especially rural women. In 1985 there were 597 million illiterate women and 352 million illiterate men. This deficit will persist well into the next century in all the developing regions." (*The World's Women*, UN, New York, 1991)

say to the Ministry of Planning, for example, 'When you are planning, remember this is where the women are and where the men are and take into account the extent and importance of their participation.' The research also revealed much more clearly the family and gender base constraints that women

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Convention spurs direct involvement of children

By Per Miljeteig-Olsen

• In the Philippines, a group of street children promoting children's rights composed a song about themselves that became the main feature in a television spot.

• Young people from all over the world gathered in June 1990 in the Netherlands for an international workshop sponsored by Nobel Laureates to discuss the future of all the world's children; they invited high-level international officials, including Mr. James P. Grant, the Executive Director of UNICEF, to take part in their discussions.

• In Brazil, street children created their own organization and went to see the President and members of

Parliament to explain their situation and to demand changes in public policies.

• In Panama, as part of the new programme of cooperation between UNICEF and the Government, a project for street children and working children includes young people in the planning.

Increasingly, young people are participating in activities to promote their own rights and welfare. These and other examples show the profound change in thinking ushered in by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which in

assuring the survival, development and protection of children, seeks also to promote children's full participation in their communities, for their own benefit and that of society. As the examples show, the idea is already producing new levels of social mobilization.

Participatory democracy

Roger Hart, Professor of Environmental Psychology at the City University of New York, recently completed a study

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Democratic participation for children

By Roger A. Hart

The term 'participation' refers generally to the process of sharing decisions which affect one's life and the life of the community in which one lives. It is the means by which a democracy is built and it is a standard against which democracies should be measured. Participation is the fundamental right of citizenship.

The degree to which children should have a voice in anything is a subject of strongly divergent opinion. Some child advocates speak of children as though they were potentially the saviours of society. But many will say that participation by children is a naive notion for children who simply do not have the decision-making power of adults.

Others feel that children should be entirely free from decision-making, particularly on community issues beyond their own daily concerns. Certainly children should be allowed to have a childhood, but it is unrealistic to expect them suddenly to become responsible, participating adult citizens at age 16, 18 or 21, without prior exposure to the skills and responsibilities involved.

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VISIT TO CAMBODIA

Mines in the social landscape

By Edgar Koh

A virtual ghost town during the Khmer Rouge years and now dusty and wind-blown in the dry season, Phnom Penh nevertheless retains a hint of its old charm, with faded, run-down French-style villas along broad, tree-lined boulevards.

It is in the city centre, however, that the visitor is reminded of some of the horrors of recent years, despite the hustle and bustle that have returned with peace and free enterprise.

Amid noisy streams of motorbikes and bicycles at a junction on Achar Mean road, a young man begs tourists for coins, which he cannot even catch because his arms are mere stumps. A little boy wraps himself around a lamp-post, staring into the distance, both his legs amputated at the knee.

Land-mines: They have become a deadly leitmotif of the Cambodian tragedy. Planted by the hundreds of thousands during the war, they continue to claim the lives and limbs of approximately 300 people a month, giving the country the highest incidence of disability in the world.

The land-mines are holding up the



Cambodia's most vulnerable, such as these school girls, need to be protected during its difficult political and economic transition.

resettlement of 500,000 refugees and internally displaced people and thus have become an obstacle to next year's elections, which are seen as the last act in the political settlement.

Despite the expected arrival of the main United Nations contingent this year with augmented capacity and

enhanced expertise, clearing the hidden explosives will become even more difficult as the wet season begins soon and roads, many already washed away in previous monsoons, become quagmires.

UNICEF itself will seek to increase services to disabled children and

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Structural impediments must be tackled

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face when they have to work, with regard to child-bearing, child-rearing and the maintenance of the family. In addition, it showed the contributions women make that are not economic in a strict sense, but contribute to the well-being and maintenance of the family and society.

We have also supported research on the effects of the economic crisis on poor women in Latin America, published as a book entitled, *The Invisible Adjustment: Poor Women and the Economic Crisis*, in 1989. The case studies show the tremendous impact of structural adjustment programmes and the economic crisis, the impact on communities and families when men leave in search of jobs.

Women extend their working day from 10 hours to 14, to 16, manage the house and care for children, cultivate the land, if they are in the rural areas, sell in the market to generate income...UNICEF has used this document, together with *Adjustment with a Human Face*, to heighten awareness and to promote programme responses.

What else does data on women's productivity show?

In most societies, the dice are loaded against women and girls, based on a notion that girls don't have as much value, especially economic value, to society. A son gets preference in education and jobs because it is felt he will support the family, take care of aging parents and so on.

But the new research shows the tremendous economic contribution of women, in both the formal and informal sectors, and the enormous, uncalculated value of the work they do in caring for children and ensuring the well-being of the family. It's not tagged 'economic', but it is vital, social human support that should be recognized and valued.

What research is being done on the girl child?

The girl child initiative is really gaining momentum. National researchers in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan have been working on it for years. UNICEF has supported research in child nutrition in India focusing on girls and women, and more recently full situation analyses of the girl child have been undertaken in nearly 50 countries. Basic questions are asked: What is her situation within the household? How is she perceived? This is important because

we need to know where the perceptions of inequality started.

In the Middle East, an excellent study has analysed all the data on child survival and development, immunization and nutrition records, health care and educational statistics, showing the disparities that exist between girl children and boy children.

You have said that a focus on the family and its empowerment will yield the most lasting and beneficial results for the girl child. Could you explain how?

Whatever form or pattern a family takes, what a child gets, he or she gets from the family. What the child does not get starts with the family.

A family battered by poverty will not have a lot to give to its children. Therefore, part of our work should be to find ways and means of relieving that poverty.

In a situation of gender discrimination and in a situation of poverty — where allocations have to be really manipulated among people — then you are heading for a disadvantaged girl, a disadvantaged adolescent girl and a disadvantaged woman. Poverty alleviation is an undeniable basis for the human progress that we are trying to achieve for both children and women.

Also, it is in the family that the values that are attached to girls and boys, men and women begin to be cultivated. Similarly, it is the family that generates pressure to get girls married off early, and preventing early marriage is one of our biggest challenges.

How can change be effected?

It is extremely important that we direct advocacy and social mobilization efforts at the community level and family level, to ensure that social and religious leaders, men and women, parents, grandparents, mothers- and fathers-in-law are reached with the research and scientific evidence that exists.

The information needs to be put in people's own cultural context, within their own teachings. For instance, UNICEF worked very closely in Indonesia with the Senior Advisory Council of Islamic Leaders, helping facilitate a national workshop in December 1990 for Muslim scholars, scientists, experts and NGOs from all over Indonesia. The workshop produced a booklet on preventing early marriage that has been widely distributed. In Nigeria, UNICEF supported a massive social mobilization effort under the aus-



Agnes Akosua Aidoo, UNICEF Adviser on Women: the tremendous economic contributions women make need recognition.

pices of the First Lady, which influenced the passage of laws against early and forced marriages in some states in the north.

The nice thing about the gender approach to development is that we recognize that the positions we take are learned positions. We are not born with

them. Yes, I am born female and a man is born male; but how we relate is a social process of learning. And it can be unlearned. That is what is being asked.

Agnes Akosua Aidoo is Global Senior Adviser on Women's Development Programmes in UNICEF.

Progress and publications

Burkina Faso, Cape Verde and Niger are among countries that have revised their family codes to ensure women's rights in inheritance, marriage and divorce. **Zimbabwe** has passed a law protecting a divorced woman's rights to property jointly acquired during marriage and another law forbidding sex discrimination, especially in employment. In **Tunisia**, women working in the public sector have been granted six months maternity leave.

Uganda has a new Ministry for Women in Development. In **Colombia**, a unit for women has been established in the Mayor's office in Cali. In **India**, an independent National Commission on Women has been created to provide policy support and monitor women's progress.

Recent publications on women/girls

- *The Girl Child: An Investment in the Future*, Section for Development Programmes for Women, UNICEF, New York, Revised Edition, 1991.
- *Educating Girls and Women: A Moral Imperative*, Education Section, UNICEF, New York 1991.
- *Strategy for Improved Nutrition of Children and Women in Developing Countries*, Policy Review Series, 1990-1, UNICEF, 1990.
- *The BRAC Non-formal Primary Education Programme in Bangladesh*, Catherine H. Lovell and Kaniz Fatema, Assignment Children, UNICEF, 1989.
- *Afghan Women and Planning*, UNICEF-UNIFEM, Conference Reports Series, No. 2, UNICEF, 1989.

Gateway to opportunity

In the Al Fatima Markaz Community Centre in Lahore, Pakistan, two women are finishing off some cotton shopping bags, part of an order that will go to Germany later in the month. In another corner of the same room, a young woman block prints a border on a cotton tablecloth.

They are among the cadre of the self-employed the Centre has trained in the last two years, a total of 220 who have learned such skills as sewing, machine knitting, shoe making and basket weaving. The total is important, because in the narrow lanes of Lahore's old walled city where the women live, poverty and tradition tend to keep women unskilled and home-bound.

"In this area, there's 80 per cent female illiteracy," says Kishwer Naheed, the Centre's administrator, briskly. "They do not allow the girls to go to school."

The Centre (also known as the Yakki Gate project, referring to the gate into the walled city near which the Centre is located), was started as a literacy and health centre in 1984 by the Business and Professional Women's Club in Lahore. In 1988, skills training was added to improve women's earning capacity. It met resistance, more from women than men, according to one of the project staff.

"When we first started, women were not willing to come," recounts Fauzia Rauf. She and Shahnaz Iqbal counsel the women on marketing and motivation.

It was as much the women's own fear and insecurity as social taboos, according to Fauzia Rauf. "Women are afraid to change their lives because they lack knowledge and confidence. An important part of our efforts is to build confidence."

Finding the Invisible Women

In 1975, an 11-member government-appointed committee submitted a ground-breaking report called *Towards Equality* to the Indian Government, reflecting three and a half years of research into the lives of Indian women.

The study examined official data and surveys and compared them to information the committee gleaned from interviews with over 10,000 women from around the country.

The researchers found that women workers were largely invisible in official data; they laboured primarily in the informal sector, for low or no wages.

As Vina Mazumdar, a committee member and social scientist honoured last year by the Association for Women in Development for her advocacy and research on women, explained, the situation of women in India couldn't begin to change until their very presence and productivity were recognized.

Displaced because of changes introduced during colonialism — between 1901 and 1931 women's participation in the labour force dropped from 37 per cent to 17 per cent, according to Mazumdar — women had largely faded from official view, into a limbo of poverty and underdevelopment.

Girls Mortality Rates Higher

Higher mortality rates among girls aged 2-5 years have been found in demographic and health surveys in a significant number of countries.

Deaths per year per 1,000 population aged 2-5 years

	Girls	Boys
Pakistan	54.4	36.9
Haiti	61.2	47.8
Bangladesh	68.6	57.7
Thailand	26.8	17.3
Syria	14.6	9.3
Colombia	24.8	20.5
Costa Rica	8.1	4.8
Nepal	60.7	57.7
Dominican Republic	20.2	17.2
Philippines	21.9	19.1
Sri Lanka	18.7	16.3
Peru	30.8	28.8
Mexico	16.7	14.7
Panama	8.7	7.6
Turkey	19.5	18.4
Republic of Korea	12.7	11.8
Venezuela	8.4	7.6

Source: Compiled by UNICEF from national survey reports of the World Fertility Survey programme. Reprinted from *The World's Women 1970-1990*, United Nations, 1991.

Mexico City goes beyond UCI

Mexico City has helped to redefine the word 'doable'. In seven months, its municipal health authorities conceived and executed a campaign to immunize 97 per cent of all children under five years of age living in the city against poliomyelitis, diphtheria, whooping cough, measles, tetanus and tuberculosis. It over-achieved the goals of universal child immunization (UCI) in October 1991, a year ahead of the deadline set for the country as a whole.

This was a victory against formidable odds: identifying, locating and immunizing children in the 449 square kilometres the metropolitan area covers, and where modern commercial, industrial and residential areas coexist with impoverished areas that lack even basic services.

CYNTHIA SELDE describes the intensive seven-month campaign, the guiding strategies and meticulous methods that spelled success.

The first key step in Mexico City's campaign to achieve UCI was the creation of a special steering commission, composed of a city representative charged with coordinating the commission's activities and representatives from municipal health care institutions.

The commission was to oversee the programme's design and implementation, ensuring the use of uniform strategies and criteria and the operation of a single system of data collection and processing.

Data established the foundation for the campaign. Baseline coverage figures for each of the six vaccines were calculated from the results of an immunization coverage survey carried out in June to July 1990, the 1990 general census and digital maps prepared especially for the programme.

Calculated from this information were the size of the target population; its distribution throughout the city; the types of actions required; the location and demands to be placed on each of the health institutions and clinics in the city; and the amounts of material, human and financial resources needed for logistic support.

The campaign was implemented in three phases, each of which coincided with periods for applying sequential doses of the Sabin anti-polio and DPT vaccines.

PROGRAMME PHASE I: GOING PUBLIC

212,087 children vaccinated; 330,195 doses of vaccine administered.

During this phase — from 8 April to 19 May 1991 — thousands of immunization stands were set up in public places, such as schools and shopping centres, throughout the city. Each week, the stands located in each geo-statistical area were moved to other public places within a 14-block radius, ensuring the entire population easy access.

When this phase began, 25 per cent of children under five years old in Mexico City lacked full immunization coverage. When it ended, only 8 per cent did. Fully 212,087 children under five were vaccinated (and their immunization histories and vital statistics recorded for subsequent use) and a total of 330,195 doses of vaccines were administered.

PROGRAMME PHASE II: GOING HOUSE-TO-HOUSE

70,000 children vaccinated; 125,773 doses of vaccine administered.

From 1 July to 9 August 1991, volunteer interviewers (who were primarily high school students) canvassed neighbour-

hoods to identify the homes of children under five who were not fully immunized. Vaccinators then visited these homes, immunizing 70,000 children and administering 125,773 doses of vaccines.

The house-to-house visits enabled municipal health authorities to establish individual immunization records for the city's entire under-five population, which were then aggregated at the city block, geo-statistical area, district and municipal levels.

PROGRAMME PHASE III: ZEROING IN

129,000 children vaccinated; 207,000 doses of vaccine administered.

During the final phase — from 30 September to 31 October 1991 — children whose immunizations were begun but not completed during the first two phases were sought out.

The information gathered during the first two programme phases was analysed and geo-statistical areas of the city were divided into one of two categories: areas where 80 per cent or more of the children lacked final doses to complete their immunization series; or areas where 20 per cent or less lacked final doses.

This identification of areas with either high or low concentrations of children needing further attention made it possible to target interventions more accurately. House-to-house visits were made in areas where large numbers of children needed final doses. Vaccination stands were set up in areas with low concentrations of children requiring final doses. This strategy made possible a 48 per cent reduction in the number of areas requiring house-to-house visits.

Other strategies helped ensure maximum coverage:

— House-to-house visits were made in the afternoon. If a child wasn't found at home, the house was visited again on the weekend.

— Vaccination stands operated on weekends.

— Health institutions and clinics offered vaccination services on weekends as well as during the week.

In this final phase, 129,000 children were vaccinated and 207,000 doses of vaccine were administered.

IMPORTANT LESSONS

Clear, concrete goals, effective planning, inter-institutional cooperation and intensive communication and social mobilization efforts helped Mexico City achieve a major World Summit for Children goal in a short seven months, a success that continues to be consolidated (see box).

The enthusiastic response of families and youth from the whole spectrum of



The city responded with enthusiasm. Students volunteered as interviewers, and taxi and bus drivers offered to transport equipment and personnel.

society was one of the most remarkable developments observed during the campaign.

The media information campaign informed the public and enlisted its active support, teaching people the actions they must take to ensure universal child immunization. As a result, people actively participated and public interest remained high even during the periods between campaign phases, when people sought immunization services at health institutions and clinics.

Special recognition must also be given to Mexico's National Commission for ensuring the achievement of Summit goals. The Commission has supervised the formulation of Mexico's ambitious

yet feasible National Programme of Action — completed at the end of 1991. The Commission has defined the strategies, drafted the roadmap, ensured the allocation of resources and coordinated and encouraged effective action on the part of Mexico's national, state and municipal government authorities, non-governmental agencies and society at large. The result is a truly national effort to fulfil World Summit for Children goals, and to keep Mexico's promise to children.

Cynthia Selde is a Communication and Social Mobilization Assistant, UNICEF, Mexico City.

Sustaining UCI

Mexico City, determined to maintain UCI, is promoting immunization at city health facilities and at vaccination stands in shopping centres, schools and other public places.

It is also opening vaccination stands in bus and railroad terminals, to vaccinate children arriving with their families from the provinces. Vaccination stands will also be set up and operated in the offices of the National Birth and Civil Registry located throughout

the city, so parents registering the birth of infants can start their children's immunizations at the same time.

In addition, national and city health authorities plan to modernize the operation of the National Birth Registry, to build a truly reliable and up-to-date record of births. Such a record will serve as the basis for creating and up-dating a national infant and child immunization and health record for each child.

Climbing the participation ladder

By Roger A. Hart

A nation is democratic to the extent that its citizens are involved, particularly at the community level. The confidence and competence to be involved must be gradually acquired through practice. It is for this reason that there should be gradually increasing opportunities for children to participate ... Regrettably, while participation by children and youth does occur in different degrees around the world, it is often exploitative or frivolous.

The Ladder of Participation Diagram is designed to serve as a first step in thinking about children's participation in projects. The ladder metaphor is borrowed from an article on adult participation, though new categories have been developed.

MANIPULATION: This describes occasions when children have no understanding of the issues, but are involved by adults in a project. One example would be having preschool children carry political placards concerning the impact of social policies on children.

DECORATION: This refers to those frequent occasions when children are given T-shirts related to some cause and may sing or dance at an event in such dress, but have little idea of what it is all about and no part in the organizing of the occasion. Adults are not pretending the cause is inspired by children; they are simply using the children to bolster their cause in a relatively indirect way.

TOKENISM: This describes those instances in which children are apparently given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about the subject or the style of communicating it, and little or no opportunity to formulate their own opinions. It could be used to describe an occasion when articulate, charming children are selected by adults to sit on a panel with little or no substantive preparation on the subject and no consultation with their peers who, it is implied, they represent.

ASSIGNED BUT INFORMED: At this level children understand the intentions of a project in which they are involved. They know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why. They have a meaningful (rather than a 'decorative') role. And they volunteer for the project after the project is made clear to them. The children who served as pages during the World

Summit for Children in New York are an example of this level of participation.

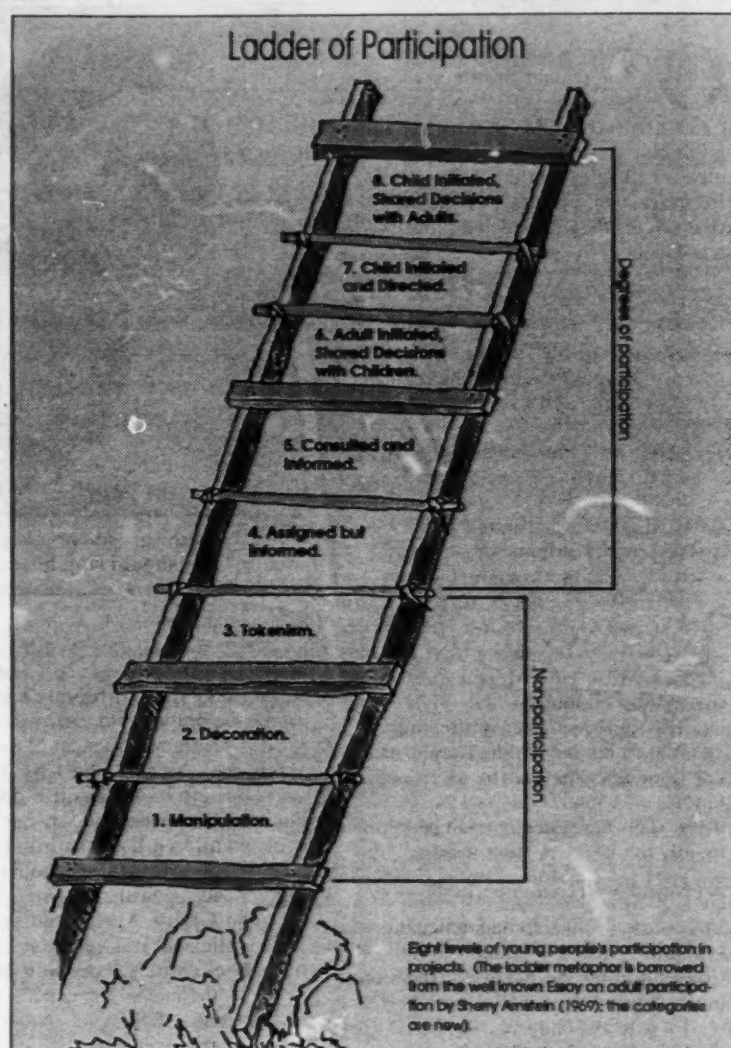
CONSULTED AND INFORMED: The project is designed and run by adults, but children understand the process and their opinions are treated seriously.

ADULT-INITIATED, DECISIONS SHARED WITH CHILDREN: As the name implies, the project is initiated by adults, but the decision-making is shared with the young people. Many community projects are meant to be shared by all, and a goal should be to involve all people but to pay particular concern to the young, the elderly and to those who may be excluded because of some special need or disability.

CHILD-INITIATED AND DIRECTED: We can all think of dozens of examples where children in their play conceive of and carry out complex projects. It is more difficult, however, to find examples of child-initiated community projects. Adults do not seem to be good at responding to young people's initiatives.

CHILD-INITIATED, DECISIONS SHARED WITH ADULTS: Regrettably, projects like these, on the highest rung of the ladder of participation, are all too rare. I believe, due to the absence of caring adults attuned to the particular interests of young people. We need people who are able to respond to the subtle indicators of energy and compassion in youth.

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION: It may be that in many large-scale mobilization projects, though the children may not have initiated the project themselves, they may



be well informed about it, feel real ownership of the issue, and even have some critical reflection about the cause.

Some activities could thus be classified on the first genuine rung of participation on the ladder, 'assigned but informed'.

Convention spurs children's involvement

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on children's participation for the UNICEF International Child Development Centre in Florence (see article this issue), in which he stresses that participation is something that cannot be taught in the abstract. It must be acquired gradually through practice.

Such 'practice' is exactly what the Convention seeks to ensure: that all children have the right to develop their capacities to the fullest extent, including the right to become responsible and active citizens in their societies as well as in the global community. In particular, several key civil and political rights, long understood as general human rights, must be seen as applying also to children (see box).

Absorbing the culture shock

Despite the enthusiasm with which they have been welcomed in many countries, the rights concerning

participation are perhaps the most controversial in the Convention.

For example, in Australia and the US, the Convention has met opposition because, to some, it appears to give too much power to children vis-à-vis their parents. Concern is voiced that parents cannot protect their children from harmful influence or prevent deviant behaviour because the Convention ensures children the right to privacy and access to information.

However, such views are based on misconceptions about the Convention, which actually states very clearly that parents have the prime responsibility to give guidance to their children, and that guidance should be given in accordance with the evolving capacities of the child.

In fact, the Convention's drafters, aware that some cultures do not view children as free and independent, with a right to make their own choices, used language throughout that allows each society to interpret provisions according to that society's traditions. (It is also important to keep in mind that the Convention applies to persons up to the age of 18, at which general majority is reached in most societies.) The participation and active involvement of children have opened a new way of focusing on children, representing both a challenge and a source of revitalization for future work.

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Participation engenders democracy

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An understanding of democratic participation and the confidence and competence to participate can only be acquired gradually through practice; it cannot be taught as an abstraction. Many Western nations think of themselves as having achieved democracy fully, though they teach the principles of democracy in a pedantic way in classrooms which are themselves models of autocracy. This is not acceptable.

There are a multitude of examples of children who organize themselves successfully without adult help. You can probably remember building a play house with friends at seven or eight years of age, unknown to adults, or in later years, organizing games. Such examples from your own memory are the most powerful evidence of young people's competence.

The principle behind such involvement is motivation; young people can design and manage complex projects together if they feel some sense of ownership in them. If young people do not at least partially design the goals of the project themselves, they are unlikely to demonstrate the great competence they possess. Involvement fosters motivation, which fosters competence, which in turn fosters motivation for further projects.

The kind of society we need to look for is one where children learn to become competent, caring citizens through involvement with competent, caring adults. There may be many valuable examples of children organizing themselves for some cause without adults, but we should not make the mistake of assuming that, in order for young people to feel ownership in a project, they have to exclude adults. We should not underestimate the importance of adult involvement, not only for the guidance older persons can offer, but also for the lessons they need to learn.

Young people's community participation is a complex issue which varies not only with a child's developing motivations and capacities, but also according to the particular family and cultural context. In cultures where adults themselves have little opportunity to influence community decisions, young people can become

the initiating force for change. An interesting example is the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka where, in many villages, children are the key to the development of community participation. Early childhood schoolteachers first change how the children participate and subsequently extend this to the adult population.

There are, however, negative examples of the use of young people by particular groups, such as the Youth Movement used by Hitler as a subversive force with adults: children were even encouraged to spy on their own parents. There are also many positive examples of youth radicalism developing as a response to adult inertia, but these usually involve older teenagers and young adults.

Most commonly, however, the degree of opportunity for a child to collaborate in the everyday management of family, schools, neighbourhood, and community groups is a reflection of the participatory opportunities for adults in that culture. The two are inevitably intertwined and so one must speak of encouraging participation by all, including children.

Intervening to improve children's participation is one means of fundamentally improving the whole society, but this should always be done while keeping in mind the child's place in a family and the impact that a child's empowerment may have on his relationships within the family.

Roger A. Hart is Professor of Environmental Psychology at the City University of New York. He is a member of the UNICEF International Child Development Centre's Urban Programme Consultative Group. The Urban Programme views participation as an important component of a strategy to stem the rising numbers of urban children in difficult circumstances.

This article is taken from Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship, by Roger A. Hart, an essay based on his research into various forms of children's participation in projects and programmes around the world. The essay is being published by UNICEF's International Child Development Centre in Florence in the Innocenti Essay series.

PARTICIPATION IN THE CONVENTION

Key provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child relating to participation are in articles 12, 13 and 17, which assure children the right to express opinions, particularly in judicial and administrative proceedings affecting them, and to seek and receive information; article 14, which guarantees children freedom of thought, conscience and religion; article 15, which ensures freedom of association and peaceful assembly; and article 16, which ensures children's right to privacy.

Ecuador's children work for democracy

By Javier Ponce Cevallos

On the last Saturday in June 1990, 186,000 children between the ages of 6 and 12 cast ballots in cities across Ecuador in what I believe were the first democratic children's elections in the world. They chose — from a list of 14 rights of the child — those rights they considered most important for them.

First, they asked to be protected from drugs, sexual abuse and all forms of violence; then, to have the right and opportunity to participate; third, they asked the State to inform them of their rights, comply with them and enforce them.

After these, they named the right to play and study, to live in a house, to be clean and healthy. The rights they selected, in short, related to the most distressing problems of a society — where thousands of children work from a very early age, where 10 per cent of the child population suffers from chronic malnutrition, and where poverty generates violence, abuse and discrimination against children.

But perhaps even more dramatic than the rights the children selected was that a democratic chorus of children's voices was heard on issues affecting them. This new phenomenon had grown rapidly in just a few short months.

A groundswell to democracy

In February 1990, Ecuador became the first Latin American country to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child, thus committing itself to implementing it. Two months later, in April, the National Coordinating Body, composed of representatives from the Central Bank's Child Labourer Programme (CLP), UNICEF and Defensa del Niño Internacional, was created to implement the project known as 'The Rights of the Child and Democracy'. The group organized the children's elections in June (with the help of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal).

The momentum towards democracy



In the Grand Agreement campaign children asked for an end to violence against them: 'They should stop hitting us.'

continued. In 1991, UNICEF and the CLP initiated the Grand Agreement campaign, 'From Violence to Tenderness', to address the problem of violence which the polling indicated was the children's primary concern. During the campaign, the CLP and UNICEF made strenuous efforts to sensitize policemen, bus drivers, teachers and mothers — the groups children had identified as most abusive towards them — about eliminating violence against children.

The Grand Agreement campaign was publicized at a ceremony attended by police, church and public transport officials, the media, the general manager of the Central Bank of Ecuador and the UNICEF representative. Then, on 30 June, in a public park in Quito, the capital of Ecuador, hundreds of artists, intellectuals, politicians, children and families signed the Grand Agreement against maltreatment.

In the shade of a tamarind tree

Then the preparations began for another daring event, the national children's summit of November 1991. Children all

over the country took part in discussions on the children's summit's plan of action so that local problems could be addressed. In provincial summits, children defined their priorities and elected their delegates to the national summit in Guayaquil.

Again it was a Saturday morning, 23 November 1991. A group of street and special children deliberated in the shade of a large tamarind tree, one of the groups at the national children's summit. The smallest child improvised maracas from the long, hollow pods that had fallen from the tamarind tree: "They should take care of us first, in stores, on the bus, at home, in the hospital and in the street ... They should let us speak and stop hitting us," he sang.

After two days of heated debate at the national summit, the delegates declared their intention to "work towards realizing our rights to survival, development, protection and participation every day ... to improve our living conditions."

A group of young people from penal institutions also attended, accom-

panied by chaperones. Meanwhile, a little girl, less than ten years old, took notes of the proceedings to prepare her own private minutes of the meeting.

What young people propose

From the national children's summit comes a plan of action calling on authorities to reduce: rates of mortality in children age one to five by one-third; malnutrition among children under age five; and illiteracy by 50 per cent during this decade. It also proposes universal access to potable water, sanitation and basic education by the year 2000, as well as the protection of children in especially difficult circumstances.

And in the euphoria and elation of one of the summit's general assemblies, the children put time limits on their demands, because they are playing for keeps.

In the future?

Continuous work. The children are motivated and aware. They are not going to stop now. The CLP and UNICEF aren't either. There is a need to further sensitize adults and public opinion. At present, the media have barely assimilated what is happening, they have gone from surprise to doubt, and from doubt to acceptance. However, they have yet to cover this issue adequately.

On the other hand, the Government has named a follow-up committee on the plan of action at the highest level. In turn, the proposals made by the children at the summit will be incorporated in the plan.

We have experienced a profound change, placing children on a stage previously dominated by adults, giving them the responsibility of defining their own problems and solutions, without asking them to stop being children. Ahead lies the need to find a way to keep the plan alive throughout the decade, ensuring that the children's motivation is maintained and flourishes.

Javier Ponce Cevallos is a journalist in Ecuador.

ARTISTS MAKE CHILDREN AWARE OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Swiss Committee promotes international performances

By Francesca Toso

Since 1987, the Swiss Committee for UNICEF has organized cultural events in primary and secondary schools — and even some kindergartens — all over Switzerland. This year, the Committee again has asked David M'Voutoukoulou and his team to bring the colourful dances of the Congo to the stage of a secondary school in Lausanne.

Musician, dancer and choreographer, M'Voutoukoulou is well known not only in his native Congo, but also in Switzerland, France and Spain. His performances are 'collective' experiences, with the artists and the public together creating the work. He is an artist who, by sharing the stage with his audience, has found a means of also sharing his culture.

In fact, M'Voutoukoulou's reputation as an artist and communicator inspired the Swiss Committee for UNICEF to develop its programme for children of 'encounters' with different cultures through the performing arts.

The programme has brought folk music groups from Colombia and Turkey, a singer from Ecuador, and a classical dancer and a story teller from India into children's lives, and scheduled for the near future are artists from Spain and Japan.

Learning through culture

The 'Artists for Children' programmes help children experience the interdependence of the world, an idea that forms a cornerstone of an innovative approach known as Education for Development,

which the Swiss Committee for UNICEF has actively advocated for years. Such innovative educational activities also encourage learning by making it fun.

"Children love these performances," says Mr. Claude Felberbaum, Director of the Etablissement Secondaire des Bergières in Lausanne, the host of M'Voutoukoulou's show this year. "They love to be part of it, and find it very natural to join in the dances and songs. It's a new way of learning, which develops knowledge, attitudes and understanding toward different cultures."

A teacher whose class is participating in the performance adds: "This is the second time I'm accompanying a class to one of these activities organized by our school in connection with UNICEF. It's a very rewarding experience — both for the children and for us teachers. When we go back to our class, children remember the few words the artist taught them in his or her native language; sometimes they remember a song or a dance ... And often they want to know more about the part of the world where the artist comes from."

Reaping the rewards

Opening children's eyes to unknown dimensions of interdependence in the world and its peoples is one of the main goals of Education for Development. Sometimes the efforts yield additional effects.

Some participating schools, for example, find that students are so interested that they decide to start fund-raising activities for the countries represented by the artists. Proceeds from these

independent activities are then donated — once again at schools' own initiative — to the Swiss Committee, which thus has an opportunity to make an additional contribution to UNICEF programmes.

Education for Development also has longer-term benefits, as an educated public is likely to be more sensitive towards the prospect of a new world order in which 'first call' is given to children.

"Our Education for Development activities make UNICEF better known and more popular among people," says Elsbeth Muller, Education for Development Officer in the Swiss

National Committee. "Within the UNICEF approach of investing in children — we at the Committee have chosen to invest in people — in their education. Schools reach children and parents.

"What we have found is that when people are educated about the needs of the rest of the world, they understand the value of their contributions and they give to us, and that's how we help UNICEF ... The artists? They are great. They help make it all happen!"

Francesca Toso is an Information Officer in the Greeting Cards Operation, UNICEF Geneva.

Tridimensional art for UNICEF

By Francesca Toso

In 1985, Constantin Grond, Sales Manager for the Swiss Committee for UNICEF, came up with the idea of offering UNICEF's customers a selection of original works of art through the Greeting Card Operation.

The idea soon became reality and for the last six years, the Swiss Committee has included among the products of its fall campaign a brass sculpture by a Swiss artist. The sculptures, reflecting such UNICEF themes as children in the family, mother and child, and children and the gift of water, are cast in a limited series of 300 pieces, each numbered and signed by the artist.

"The demand for these original works of art has been high," says Mr. Grond. "Some people have started col-

lecting the whole series of sculptures and are impatient to see the next creation for UNICEF."

For the artists, associating their name with UNICEF is a privilege. Maya Heller Schucan, whose sculpture "Water for All" was featured in the 1991 UNICEF GCO collection, said, "You feel you have directly contributed to improving lives of children less fortunate than ours ... Also, what has been extremely encouraging for me was the feedback from friends and those familiar with my work who fully supported and praise my association with the UNICEF initiative."

Proceeds from the sale of the sculptures amount to nearly SFr 300,000 a year (US\$200,000), half of which — as for all other GCO products — the Swiss Committee contributes to UNICEF programmes.

First Call for Children

The essential needs of children should be given priority in bad times as well as good* — Plan of Action, World Summit for Children

Spreading the word on social progress



The world over, the word is getting around. People can make life better for themselves and their children. The millions upon millions who streamed to clinics to have their children immunized heard it and now polio, measles, diphtheria, tetanus, tuberculosis and pertussis no longer claim such grim tolls. The mothers mixing oral rehydration salts heard it too and the swift onset of diarrhoea in a child doesn't chill their hearts with the same bleakness. People are planting trees and digging wells, managing community health centres and building new schools, confident in their new knowledge.

The world has seen a great deal of proof recently that progress and development are "catching" and health and well-being, in some ways, are as contagious as disease. And more and more it's becoming clear that social mobilization, social mar-

keting and advocacy, all are key parts of the route of transmission.

● This issue of *First Call for Children* examines social mobilization and advocacy, in theory and practice (for articles on Bangladesh's experience and the communication evolution, please see pages 8 and 9).

● For a number of outstanding examples of how concerted social mobilization works, see the story on Mexico's UCI campaign (page 3), Ecuador's children's elections (page 5) and Uganda's AIDS education efforts (page 7).

● This issue also reports on the battle against iodine deficiency disorders, the UNICEF strategy to helping women overcome obstacles to progress and ways the Convention on the Rights of the Child is sparking new, exciting levels of direct involvement by children in their own rights.

unicef 

United Nations Children's Fund

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Hospitals reach baby-friendly goal

"Efforts should be made to increase women's confidence in their ability to breastfeed. Such empowerment involves the removal of constraints and influences that manipulate perceptions and behaviour towards breastfeeding, often by subtle and indirect means... Furthermore, obstacles to breastfeeding within the health system, the workplace and the community must be eliminated.

From the Innocenti Declaration on the Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding, Florence, Italy, July-August 1990.

In just under two years since WHO and UNICEF issued the Innocenti Declaration, some of the constraints and barriers to successful breastfeeding have fallen in 52 hospitals designated baby-friendly after volunteering to undergo a rigorous international assessment exercise in February. The hospitals are all in the 12 vanguard countries of the baby-friendly hospital initiative: Bolivia, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Gabon, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Turkey.

Now, after the successes already achieved, the baby-friendly hospital initiative is being extended to hospitals worldwide. At a news conference on 9 March in Washington, DC, UNICEF

Executive Director James P. Grant announced the hospitals reaching the baby-friendly goal and launched the global phase of the initiative. Simultaneous announcements were made at news events in the 12 vanguard countries.

Spreading the word

Every time a hospital is designated baby-friendly, a small information revolution occurs, according to Richard Reid, Director of the UNICEF Division of Public Affairs. "Hospitals must become conduits for correct, complete information," he said. "With hospitals working on the side of mothers and babies, the myths and misconceptions about breastfeeding can be replaced with accurate, constructive information about breastfeeding, its numerous benefits, its management. From there communities can build the network of support needed to guarantee that mothers who choose to

breastfeed are faced with encouragement, not obstacles."

Like the initiative itself, the information revolution won't stop at the hospital door. The network of breastfeeding women, health care workers and lactation managers that is being created will spread knowledge of the benefits and value of breastfeeding throughout communities. How this will ultimately translate into broader economic and social support for breastfeeding remains, of course, to be seen. Increased demand itself, however, is a potent force.

Designated baby-friendly

The designation, issued in each instance by a national authority such as the Ministry of Health or another national agency, attests that the hospital displaying the certificate follows the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding.

In this initial round of assessments,

each hospital was evaluated by a team consisting of at least one international lactation professional, most of whom attended a week-long training session created for UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) by Wellstart, a private non-profit organization that trains health-care workers in lactation management. Three or four lactation professionals selected in each of the 12 countries completed the assessment teams.

Hospitals in the 12 lead countries were evaluated on the basis of the Global Hospital Assessment Criteria tool, a 41-page booklet of guidelines and questionnaires created by lactation experts and issued jointly by WHO and UNICEF. Assessment teams completed the tool and submitted it to the national designating authority for its decision.

The assessment team carried out the evaluations, which consisted of detailed interviews and observation, in visits over two to three days. Senior administrative and nursing officers of each hospital were asked about hospital breastfeeding practice and policy, as were senior maternity nursing staff and other maternity care providers.

Assessors interviewed mothers in depth about the degree of baby-friendliness at the hospital, and further interviews were conducted with staff and patients in the antenatal services.



Script writers learn children's issues at conference in Brazil

By Emily Booker

In Latin America, the television screens are filled daily with the popular stories of the *telenovela*. These soap operas reach into millions of homes throughout the continent on 456 television stations in the region, and are sometimes sold to Europe, China and Africa.

The UNICEF Regional Office for the Americas and the Caribbean and UNICEF Brasilia have started to tap into this powerful communication channel, encouraging the scriptwriters to incorporate children's issues in their story lines. At a workshop in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, last November, 22 of Latin America's leading soap opera script writers from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela joined 10 UNICEF representatives from throughout the region to discuss the possibilities.

Putting children in the plot

During the four-day workshop, the writers were briefed on *Facts for Life*, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Education for All and other concerns of women and children. In their turn, the writers presented segments of some of their soap operas. Many of these dramatized social issues such as alcoholism, teenage pregnancy, drug addiction and AIDS, indicating that Latin American writers already have experience in addressing community concerns in their stories.

Nevertheless, one of the challenges extensively discussed was how factual information can be incorporated into the fictional and emotional setting of a soap opera. The Argentinean writer Jorge Maestro told the Rio conference of his experience in writing about AIDS.

The story traced the life of a bank clerk who is devastated to discover he is infected with the human immunodeficiency

virus that causes AIDS. The bank clerk tells his family — his mother is distraught, as is his sister. Then, the bank clerk begins to encounter discrimination from all quarters — he loses his job, many of his friends avoid him, and he finds himself isolated by ignorance and fear.

As the writer Jorge Maestro said, the story revealed the insidious nature of discrimination and the social problems encountered by AIDS sufferers in an emotionally compelling way. Viewers became involved in the tragedy of the hero's story and thus became aware of the hidden problems of living with AIDS.

The involvement of the viewers in the lives of the characters means greater concentration on the messages and social values conveyed by the stories. And if the soap opera presents a mirror to the world, it can be used to break down barriers of ignorance.

The story-line and the bottom line

A number of writers said that the conference served to acquaint them with many issues affecting children and opened up a wealth of story ideas for their soap operas. It was also noted that broadcast communication has been shown to be more effective when discussion or debate follows a programme. In the case of soap operas, viewers often share comments about the details of the stories and the lives of the characters and thus

reinforce the content.

Finally, participants pointed out that, because all privately owned television stations are concerned with making money, no matter how socially responsible a serious programme might be, if it is not popular with viewers it does not get to be shown.

The writers signed a declaration, the "Letter from Rio" at the conference's

end, stating their intention to continue incorporating social issues in their soap operas. They said they feel confident that, armed with technical and factual information from UNICEF, they will be able to bring children's concerns into

their scripts and into millions of lives.

Emily Booker is Radio and Television Information Officer, Division of Information, UNICEF New York.



UNICEF Executive Director James P. Grant (left) greets a Senegalese child representative after receiving a copy of the Dakar Declaration signed by Mayor Rougui Barry of Matam, Guinea (right). The host of the International Colloquium of Mayors, Mayor Mamadou Diop of Dakar, Senegal (centre left), looks on.

Mayors pledge Convention support

Nineteen mayors and municipal representatives from around the world and 40 Senegalese mayors pledged to strive towards implementing the articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Declaration of the World Summit for Children when they signed the Dakar Declaration at the International Colloquium of Mayors in Dakar, Senegal, in January this year.

UNICEF Executive Director James P. Grant told the gathering, "Cities are increasingly the new frontier for social progress on the threshold of the third millennium, and the likes of you gathered in this hall are at

the cutting edge of the new world order now struggling to be born."

He outlined five steps mayors could take to make cities baby- and child-friendly places within five years. They were: 1) holding a special session of the municipal council at least once a year in which child representatives participate; 2) achieving the goals for the year 2000 in a shorter time; 3) implementing an information programme on oral rehydration therapy; 4) launching a campaign to promote breastfeeding and ensuring that all city hospitals are baby-friendly by the end of 1992; and 5) setting up an infant growth monitoring system.

Where children play 'funeral'

By Rebecca Katumba

In a grove of banana trees, behind a dilapidated mud-and-wattle hut, about 20 children between the ages of four and nine play a strange game of make-believe they call 'funeral', using heaps of stones to mark rows of graves.

Their sombre pastime doesn't surprise Esteli Namubiru, a 65-year-old widow. "For the last two years or so," she explains, "we have had no weddings in this neighbourhood. Just funerals."

Namubiru has lost three sons and two daughters-in-law to AIDS. A third daughter-in-law looks deceptively healthy, but Namubiru knows it's likely that she too will succumb to the disease.

Today, in her village of Kasensero in Rakai district, about 108 kilometres southwest of the Ugandan capital of Kampala, Namubiru spends most of her time looking after 18 children, aged between 1½ and 15 years old.

A few houses away, 70-year-old Haji Ibrahim Busungu sits on his verandah with a distant look in his eyes. He points to the mounds of red soil behind the house. "Those are the graves of my loved ones," he sighs. Busungu, whose hopes for support in his old age lie buried with his children, looks after nine orphaned grandchildren.

In the swath of tragedy that AIDS has cut through Uganda, such stories are common, reflecting the terrible strain the mounting numbers of orphaned children have put on the traditional extended family support system. In the district of Rakai alone, according to UNICEF statistician Susan Hunter, there are 25,000 AIDS orphans. Emmanuel Pinto, a member of parliament from the same district, says a head count he organized last year arrived at a total of 40,000. In the country as a whole, as many as one million

children are believed to be AIDS orphans.

Impoverished and abandoned

Other factors compound the problems of care for children orphaned by AIDS. For one, the stigma and fear associated with the disease are making many relatives increasingly reluctant to look after children who they suspect may be infected with the virus. For another, many children find they have lost not only their parents but also lost their rights to parental property and to humane treatment.

Pinto recalls a group of five siblings under the care of a 17-year-old. "They used to cook in an old paint can, as their property and all their possessions were taken over by relatives," he says.

Jolly Nyeko, senior probation and

welfare officer in the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and head of the Uganda AIDS Commission's subcommittee on AIDS orphans, says that inheritance customs permit a dead man's brothers to claim his property, often leaving a widow and children impoverished.

Community-based action

The solution, according to Nyeko, is "community-based action and proper standards of children's care, especially the legal aspect." Another strategy, according to the Rev. Tom Tuma, the programme officer with the Behavioural and Social Coordination unit at the Uganda AIDS Commission, is for an outside group such as the church to take an active role in supervising guardians.

A major concern is protecting chil-

dren from abuse, unfortunately increasingly common. When 14-year-old John Lumanzi was 11 he ran away from his uncle's house in the neighbouring district of Masaka, because he "was being treated very badly."

When he reached the shores of Lake Victoria, he began peddling whatever came his way, and helping out the fishermen whenever they had some work. He now lives alone in a tiny shack he has built quite close to the shore. Similarly, many of the teenage barmaids in Rakai's main town, Kyotera, are believed to be AIDS orphans who have run away from their caretakers. A villager, Samson Mukabya, says most children orphaned by AIDS, burdened with an immense responsibility, turn cynical and bitter. "Growing up without school or a vocational education, these children are potential rebels. What is their future? What is ours?" he asks.

Their future also worries local and international agencies. To help improve it, Pinto formed the Rakai Development Association, which pays the school fees for orphans whose guardians cannot afford them. He was also instrumental in forming the Uganda Community-Based Association for Children, a national body assisting all children in difficult circumstances.

New classrooms have been added to Rakai's Luganzo Primary School, and a day-care centre meant for 30 children (but which currently accommodates 50) was also started. Pinto, who insists that the orphans should remain within their community, is also working out the legalities of demarcating an overgrown plantation into plots, to be given out to jobless, teen-aged boys.

Rebecca Katumba writes for Women's Feature Service.



Relatives, fearing that orphaned children are also infected with HIV, may be reluctant to look after them.

Behaviour change: Key to AIDS prevention

By Lillian Lubega

"I lost my mother only last week as a result of AIDS, and so when I act the main role in *The Riddle*, I feel I am replaying my own life situation," Tom Bbosa, a pupil from Masaka, said. Tom was one of the pupils participating in the school AIDS drama competition held in more than 8,000 Ugandan primary schools last year.

The drama competition is one of many attempts being made by organizations working in Uganda in the area of AIDS control to bring an important message home to children and parents before they suffer a loss like Tom Bbosa. The message is that only a change in behaviour can protect people from AIDS.

According to statistics from Uganda's Ministry of Health, 60 per cent of Ugandans know that AIDS is

spread mainly through sexual contact. The challenge now is to motivate people to change their behaviour. A promising strategy is to bring people together in interactive settings where they not only can receive information about AIDS but also can discuss how it relates to their own behaviour. Drama, an important part of the national culture and one of the few direct links between the schools and the communities they serve, fits the description.

"We looked for activities that would be interesting and exciting but that would also promote serious discussion in schools and communities. Drama was a natural choice," says Peggy Robbins Bide, UNICEF Programme Officer, Basic Education.

And so the School Health Education Project of the Ministry of Education and Sports organized the drama competition featuring *The Riddle*, a play originally written by Dr. Harriet Msembe, a lecturer at Lock Haven University in Pennsylvania, USA. A committee in Uganda modified the script to reflect the country's social reality in the age of AIDS, portraying promiscuous sexual

relations, child seduction and the spread of the disease, and reinforcing AIDS prevention messages.

Interest and concern continued even after the curtain fell. Newspapers reported that parents reacted by calling for strong sanctions against promiscuity and for change in the norms and practices that contribute to the spread of AIDS. "I think we created a significant awareness about the need to change

behaviour to prevent AIDS," said Mary Owor, programme manager of the School Health Education Project.

The impact was great enough to persuade the Ministry of Education to introduce a similar programme in the secondary schools and teacher training colleges this year.

Lillian Lubega is External Relations Officer in UNICEF Kampala.

AIDS on the syllabus

The School Health Education Project of Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports has made AIDS education an important part of the new primary basic science and health education syllabus. "The aim is to ensure that children know how to avoid catching the virus, especially since we have heard of cases where older men and women are seducing young boys and girls who up until now have been AIDS free," says Mary Owor, programme manager of the project.

The new syllabus, on which children are tested in all primary schools, also addresses such issues as immunization, control of diarrhoeal diseases, nutrition, water and sanitation. Children are encouraged to pass their new life-saving knowledge on to their parents.

The epidemic's spread

According to estimates by the World Health Organization by the end of the century some 30 to 40 million people will be infected with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that causes AIDS, more than 90 per cent of them in developing countries. Some 8 million to 10 million children will have been born with HIV, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa. Since the pandemic began, about 1.5 million adults and 500,000 children have developed AIDS. In 1993 the disease is expected to surpass measles and malaria to become the second greatest cause of mortality in children, after diarrhoea.

Mines in Cambodian landscape

continued from page 1

women, where needed, treating them for trauma and less visible maiming, such as hearing damage, and providing prosthetics.

In a broader sense, the land-mines are symbolic in that they take their toll mostly on the innocent, much as the war did. Even in peace the social landscape of Cambodia hides many mines, which will only be revealed with — and not necessarily in — time. Some are already visible. The transition in the political sphere since the peace agreement last October has meant pluralization and liberalization of public life, but it has also brought a certain degree of corruption and lawlessness.

Central planning and state control have given way to a 'wild', speculative capitalism that has to be tamed before there can be any social benefits from a market economy. The cessation of Soviet assistance, channelled through the Phnom Penh authorities, threatens whatever fragile structures in basic health, education, and water and sanitation built up over the last 13 years.

Government workers and teachers, their low pay eroded by high prices — if they are paid promptly or at all — are abandoning their posts and moving into

the private sector. As in some of the Eastern European nations now making a similar transition, the swing to capitalism risks exposing the country's most vulnerable, its children and women, to renewed deprivations.

In 1990, 123 babies out of every thousand did not make it to their first birthday and 193 children out of every thousand were dying before they reached five years of age — rates second only to those in Afghanistan in Asia. An annual average of 500 mothers died from pregnancy-related causes for every 100,000 live births in the 1980s. A third of low-income families are headed by women, a consequence of the war, and they have no safety net at all.

Critical to the protection of the most disadvantaged and to the recovery and development of the country as a whole will be the coordination and control of assistance now being brought into the country by international agencies, non-government organizations and others, all with their own agendas, whatever they have to offer.

Edgar Koh, Chief Editor of the Division of Information, UNICEF New York, visited Cambodia in late January 1992.

Social mobilization: Lessons from Bangladesh

By Neill McKee

A multitude of programme activities involving numerous partners made 1990 a landmark year in Bangladesh: the country was one of the first 22 nations to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child; its head of State was prominent in Summit proceedings; and its civil service built the goals of the World Summit for Children into the country's fourth Five-Year Plan.

Most notable, though, was perhaps Bangladesh's increase in immunization coverage, with the rate surging from a mere 2 per cent in 1985 to 62 per cent in 1990. Never in the country's history had so many groups come together for a single social programme: the President, eight social sector ministries, parliamentarians, senior civil servants, journalists, hundreds of non-governmental organizations, social and youth clubs, religious leaders, film and sports stars and local business leaders all successfully worked towards a common goal.

In 1991, we took stock of how and why social mobilization was so important in our achievements. Helping in our analysis was a model we devised that showed that successful communication combines three separate components of advocacy,

social mobilization and programme communication (see the figure at right). It became clear that the overlap and interaction of all three components were crucial in achieving and sustaining immunization coverage in Bangladesh.

A balancing act

Despite the importance of all three components, many social communication and social marketing programmes in Bangladesh and around the world devote considerable if not exclusive attention to programme communication activities such as TV and radio spots, public announcements, site markers and posters. As crucial as these and other programme communication activities are, failure to prepare the political and social ground through advocacy and to identify and mobilize the partners who will stimulate and sustain widespread demand will jeopardize success.

In Bangladesh, many organizations implementing the expanded programme of immunization (EPI) made concerted efforts to involve the most senior and influential government figures in the effort. As a result, the President, Prime Minister, ministers and parliamentarians became full supporters of EPI, making speeches and appearances on numerous occasions in support of EPI, and the cabinet issued

directives to involve district and divisional commissioners. In addition, the UNICEF Executive Director, other senior UNICEF officials and two Goodwill Ambassadors visited. Training seminars and orientation sessions were also conducted for journalists. Such advocacy was necessary for four to five years to reach the goal and remains crucial in retaining commitment to the programme and making it sustainable.

Matching partners and strengths

The model not only helped us see the inter-relationships between activities but also the weaknesses and strengths of our strategies.

We learned quite clearly that, while we had some notable success in the areas of advocacy and social mobilization, our programme communication efforts needed strengthening. For instance, a study completed last year revealed that in trying to make imams (religious leaders) immunization programme communicators, we created expectations that could not be fulfilled by the programme, because imams wanted to be trained as village doctors, with the right to prescribe medicines and receive payment for services.

It was decided that, instead, it would be more natural and fruitful to have imams further our new sanitation efforts by deliv-

ering messages related to the teachings of the Koran or to involve them in the campaign to achieve universal primary education through the creation of mosque-based schools.

Similarly, we discovered weaknesses in vaccinators' programme communication skills, through a national evaluation based on direct observation at immunization outreach sites, interviews and focus group discussions with vaccinators and mothers of never-immunized children. By and large, we found the vaccinators to be poor counsellors who made a number of errors interacting with clientele, causing people to drop out of the programme. This was a particularly important discovery since radio and television have limited impact in Bangladesh, and field workers are the main communicators in social programmes. To rectify these weaknesses, we are planning a mas-

sive refresher training programme this year, emphasizing improved interpersonal communication, and we are developing an interpersonal communication module to use in a wide range of programmes.

On the positive side, our research concluded that our allies from the entertainment world have multi-programme value.



Popular Bangladesh film star Shabana received a tetanus injection as part of the mobilization.

Local film and television stars not only helped create a high level of awareness about the expanded programme of immunization but also donated their time, voices and images to producing programmes uplifting female children and short plays on diarrhoea and oral rehydration salts that have had 500 free showings on Bangladesh television.

The three-tier communication model is proving very useful in defining and giving focus to a broad range of initiatives. In Bangladesh, we are now applying these concepts to other programmes such as water and sanitation and basic education.

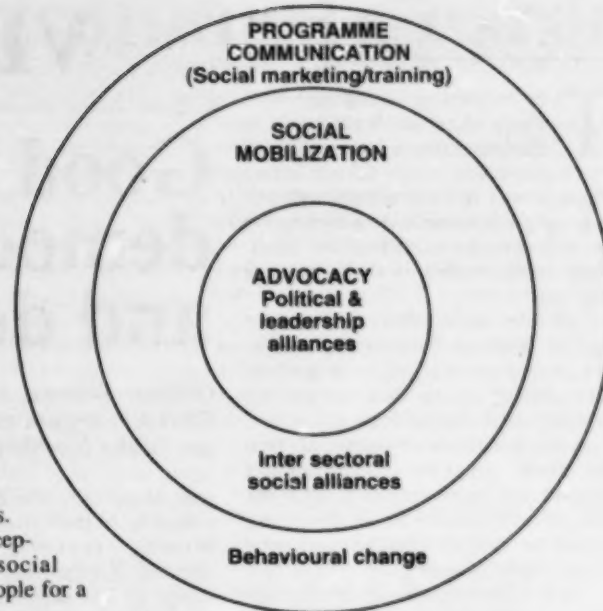
Neill McKee is the Chief of Programme Communication and Information, in UNICEF Dhaka. His book entitled *Social Mobilization and Social Marketing in Developing Communities: Lessons for Communicators* will be published this year by Southbound Publications, Malaysia.

What the terms mean

Advocacy: Frequently used to mean general information and public affairs activities, this is actually a highly focused activity and involves organizing information into argument, to be communicated through various interpersonal and media channels. Its goal is to gain the acceptance of political and social leaders and to prepare people for a development programme.

Social Mobilization: This is the process of bringing together all feasible and practical intersectoral social allies, such as government and non-governmental bodies, religious and community organizations and business allies. Its goals are to raise people's awareness of and demand for a development programme, to assist in the delivery of resources and services, and to strengthen community participation for sustainability and self-reliance.

Programme Communication: This is a highly researched communication activity targeting specific groups and audiences with specific strategies, materials, messages or training programmes, through various traditional and non-traditional media and interpersonal channels. Its goal is to create and sustain behavioural change.



Defeating iodine deficiency with a grain of salt

Taken over a lifetime in small, regular amounts, approximately one teaspoonful of iodine will prevent a range of maladies collectively called iodine deficiency disorders (IDD). DAVID P. HAXTON writes on the progress and potential for eliminating the scourge of IDD in this decade.

Iodine deficiency, the world's most significant cause of mental retardation, is also the most preventable of all problems of malnutrition.

For over 70 years, it has been known that to prevent the problems caused by lack of iodine in the human diet, all that was required was to iodize table salt, package it well, sell it and keep up the practice.

Salt is consumed by all humans usually on a daily basis in similar amounts, and the process of iodizing it is simple, affordable and tested.

Yet approximately 1 billion people around the world remain at risk. In large part, this is due to a lack of information to make the judgments required to initiate and sustain an iodine deficiency elimination programme. The problem simply was not high on the political agendas of most countries. Communication between those with the knowledge and those needing it was also weak. In addition, only in the past decade or so have the severity and extent of the deficiency and its consequences for human development become better known and understood.

Proven efficacy

Dietary iodine, needed to produce the hormones regulating growth and development, is required even before birth. Without iodine, children will be stunted, apathetic, mentally retarded, or incapable of normal movement, speech or hearing. In pregnant women, lack of iodine can cause miscarriage and stillbirth.

The efficacy of the sustained use of iodized salt in eliminating IDD was conclusively shown in the results of a recent study by Drs. Burgi, Supersaxo and Selz in Switzerland who state, "... iodized salt was the decisive factor in eradicating goitre and cretinism in Switzerland." The report concludes that, "iodized salt has, without any doubt, been the most cost-effective preventive health measure ever applied in Switzerland."

While a national system to introduce iodized salt is getting under way, the nutrient can be administered to populations most at risk by capsule or injections. This assures that no pregnant woman will give birth to a cretin. The capsule will provide protection for at least two years; the injection for up to five years;



More than 8 million of Viet Nam's 65 million people live in mountainous areas, making them vulnerable to iodine deficiency disorders. Here, a doctor examines a boy for signs of goitre.

thus bridging the gap until iodized salt becomes available commercially. In small communities, iodine can also be added to water using a module on hand-pumps.

Doing the doable

One of the most doable goals of the World Summit for Children is to eliminate IDD from the globe in this decade. While some political leaders had earlier committed to iodine deficiency elimination (at the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Summit in 1986, for example), the World Summit gave the most powerful political commitment to this idea. To ensure accelerated action, 55 of those leaders sent representatives to the meeting on micronutrients entitled 'Ending Hidden Hunger' in Montreal in October 1991, to adopt policies and to agree upon strategies to 'keep the promise.'

The effort to eliminate IDD requires the cooperation of salt manufacturers and governments; legislation and means of enforcement; technology and science; national delivery mechanisms; and quality-control procedures to assure a good product to the most remote village consistently at a fair price. If quality is not sustained, the iodine in manufactured salt could dissipate before the consumer gets it.

The 'Hidden Hunger' meeting in Montreal produced evidence that, if countries with serious IDD problems will use their own programmes and institutions for implementing actions to eliminate IDD, then international cooperation will be forthcoming.

The discussions also showed clearly that

improved social communications and better social marketing are essential. Some targets could be reached with aggressive planning and improved management of the science and technology already available. By the end of 1992, for example, half of the countries affected could have plans for introducing iodized salt into national markets. All governments could have national multidisciplinary teams working on iodine deficiency with combined actions to apply iodinated oil where indicated while getting salt iodination under way. (This is especially true for those preparing national programmes of action for children as called for in the Summit Declaration.) Training can be accelerated at all levels and in all disciplines.

Low cost, high gains
The estimated cost to accelerate progress worldwide, including the cost of surveys, of improved laboratories, training, communications and the purchase of iodine, would be about US\$100 million (about the cost of two tactical fighter planes or three Trident missiles). The cost of iodized salt is about five US

cents per person per year; the cost of administering iodinated oil is about double that. In the long run, most of these costs will be incorporated into the cost of salt in the market, and thus the public will support the major investments related to sustainability. Few, if any, public health ventures have this advantage. Few action programmes offer such potential for public and private sector collaboration.

Already progress can be reported. Bolivia and Bhutan will reach the level of zero new cases of IDD in 1993 and then work towards sustaining progress with improved surveillance of the salt iodation efforts of public and private manufacturers. India will produce about 5.5 million tons of iodized salt by 1993. By 1995, India and China will be iodating sufficient salt for their populations. Delivery and quality assurance systems in place are being improved.

How ICCIDD can help

ICCIDD, which has created greater awareness of the problems of IDD, has forged strong alliances with the World Health Organization, UNICEF and other international aid agencies such as the Canadian International Development Agency, the Swedish International Development Agency, the US Agency for International Development and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Its membership list of over 250 scientists, planners, communicators, managers, food technologists, nutritionists and other experts is available to national planners.

Those interested can contact ICCIDD directly or through the office of the UNICEF representative in the country for technical advice and support in: (i) national surveys of incidence or of the salt industry; (ii) the design of a national plan of elimination or (iii) reviews of laboratory systems, training needs, and monitoring for quality assurance. (Please see box for contact names.)

UNICEF representatives can get information from the Regional Nutrition Advisors or from Dr. Peter Greaves in New York.

David P. Haxton is a former Regional Director of UNICEF and a Board Member of the ICCIDD. He has worked on IDD elimination programmes in Asia, Africa, Central and South America.

ICCIDD CONTACTS

- Dr. Basil S. Hetzel, Executive Director, International Council for the Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders, CSIRO Division of Human Nutrition, Kintore Avenue, Adelaide 5000, Australia.
- Dr. E.A. Pretell, Jefe Servicio de Endocrinología, Hospital Cayetano Heredia, Apartado 6083, Lima.
- Dr. F. Delange, Professor of Pediatrics, Thyroid Clinical Research Centre, Department of Nuclear Medicine, St. Pierre University Hospital, 322 rue Haute, 1000 Brussels.
- Dr. O.L. Ekpechi, Professor of Medicine, University of Nigeria, Enugu, Nigeria.
- Dr. C.S. Pandav, Centre for Community Medicine, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Ansari Nagar, New Delhi 110 029.
- Dr. T. Ma, Institute of Endocrinology, Tianjin Medical College, Tianjin, China.

Private enterprise for public health

One of the reasons Bolivia's national programme to eliminate iodine deficiency diseases (IDD) has been successful was the creation of a private company — EMCOSAL — to produce and distribute iodized salt.

Started in 1987 by the Ministry of Health, UNICEF and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/World Health Organization (WHO), EMCOSAL has managed to establish a national market for iodized salt, despite the fact that uniodized, naturally occurring salt is widely available from salt lakes, mines and springs. Because of EMCOSAL, 30 other private producers of iodized salt (five cooperatives and 25 private companies) have started up, meaning that approximately 80 per cent of the population can buy iodized salt commercially.

The results are apparent in epidemiological data. According to Dr. Guido Cornale, health officer in the UNICEF La Paz office, salt iodization and widespread administration of iodized oil have led to a

dramatic drop in the rate of goitre incidence — from 61 per cent in 1981 to 20.6 per cent in 1989.

UNICEF also provides training, soft loans and technical assistance to producers to increase production and improve quality. EMCOSAL, run by UNICEF, the Ministry of Health and PAHO/WHO, has a controlling market share of about 20 per cent and manages to ensure that salt prices remain stable and competitive and that salt remains accessible to low-income groups. Its current target is to reach the 20 per cent of the population who, because they live in remote areas where distribution costs are too high, don't have access to iodized salt. One strategy that has promise is to iodate and distribute salt blocks and coarse salt, the types of salt traditionally consumed in the isolated communities. Active marketing, social communication and the distribution of iodized salt through all possible channels — including NGOs, cooperation programmes, the Church, etc. — will also be needed.

Social mobilization training a goal

By Jack C. Ling and Janis F. Lindsteadt

Social mobilization (SOCMOB), a development process pioneered by UNICEF, is being used more and more widely as a tool for social change. Now, Tulane University's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine is developing a global SOCMOB training programme, linking institutions of higher learning in several regions, to help ensure proficiency in all the areas of expertise needed for successful SOCMOB.

Mahidol University in Thailand and the University of the Philippines are the first developing-country institutions to express interest in participating in the programme. Links with Nigerian institutions are being forged, and over the next six months efforts will be made to reach universities in a selected number of countries in other regions.

What SOCMOB is and does

Simply stated, SOCMOB is a process to transform development goals into societal action, embracing the critical principle of community involvement and seeking to empower individuals for action.

As Dr. Nyi Nyi, Director of the Programme Division at UNICEF, describes it: "When all social groups aspire to the attainment of a national objective which transcends narrow political barriers, means are found, solutions are developed and innovations become commonplace."

The communication key

The role of communication in SOCMOB is all-pervasive. At the policy level, advocacy is used to foster commitment to action; communication is essential in order to generate a knowledgeable and supportive environment for decision-making, including the allocation of adequate resources. At the grassroots level, communication aims to inform and engage the active participation of the community and individuals through multiple channels. Effective communication is also necessary among those work-

ing to implement programmes.

UNICEF recognized the importance of communication in disseminating knowledge and improving community participation in various projects as early as the 1960s. Initially labelled 'programme-support information', the input subsequently became project-support communication (PSC). By the mid-1970s, the UNICEF Executive Board adopted an information policy with a special section on PSC. By the end of the decade, PSC officers were posted in most regional and in some country offices, and communication became a formal component in a growing number of country programmes.

The 1980s saw an expansion of communication activities in UNICEF. Under the guidance of Executive Director James P. Grant, UNICEF launched the worldwide child survival and development movement, a leading activity of which is the universal child immunization (UCI) campaign. In this crucial effort, UNICEF adopted the advocacy lessons of the green revolution in agriculture, broadened special events developed by fund-raisers, and encouraged grass-roots involvement. The majority of developing countries have taken up the UCI campaign with stunning results. Within a few years, UCI has raised immunization coverage from 20 to 80 per cent. Statistically, it is estimated that more than 3 million children's lives are saved annually and several millions more are spared crippling disabilities because of UCI.

Training project aims

Until now, many promotional media and advocacy tasks have been managed by those with journalism and/or public relations backgrounds. Social marketers have handled the acceptance and distribution of products, and health educators have promoted community involvement. Clearly, there is a need for persons who can manage a continuum of mobilization efforts, rather than the individual, sometimes isolated, components.

The Tulane project, which has received support and endorsement from UNICEF, the World Health

Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund, plans to fill that vital need. The programme will offer training in advocacy and lobbying, media work and liaison, public health practices, policy and management, social change theories, programme planning, training methodologies and education principles.

The programme will have four phases of development:

1. Six case studies will be developed as core training material, along with a prototype training curriculum, and institutions' and faculty training needs will be identified. The training curriculum prototype will be reviewed by a panel of distinguished academics and development practitioners, ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of both academia and the field.
2. In collaboration with participating institutions, in 1993 a three-month prototype training programme, expected to count towards a Master's degree in health development, will be conducted at Tulane for mid-level programme managers.
3. The training and applied research capacities of institutions in regions such as East Asia and the Pacific, South Asia, Africa, Latin America/Caribbean and the Middle East will be expanded, and training and research programmes will be started in those regions.
4. A training assistance and information exchange network, including a social mobilization journal, will be established.

Jack C. Ling, former Director of Information and Communication at UNICEF (1972-82), directs the developmental phase of the programme at Tulane University; Janis Lindsteadt is Programme Associate of the International Communication Enhancement Center at Tulane's School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine. For more information on SOCMOB, contact UNICEF Programme Communications Section or ICEC, Tulane University SPHTM, 1505 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70112.

VIEWPOINT

Good government, democracy and development

Gillian Wilcox, Information Officer in the UK Committee for UNICEF, argues that improving the level of human development is one of the best ways to ensure open political systems.

The overthrow of regimes seriously short on legitimacy in Eastern Europe has generated much attention and excitement in recent years. More gradually and quietly, progress towards democratization has also occurred in parts of the developing world, mainly in Latin America and Asia.

In turn, these events have helped fuel the demands for greater participation in and accountability of government, being made with increasing urgency in some African countries. This has given rise to debate on how the international community should respond and, more explicitly, what the role of aid should be in fostering respect for human rights and more open forms of government.

It is fashionable these days for aid donors, particularly though not exclusively bilateral ones, to talk of 'good government' and to look at ways of making aid allocations conditional upon progress in this direction.

Aid conditionality is, of course, not new. World Bank Structural Adjustment Loans, for example, are conditional upon countries' implementing certain economic and financial policies, and foreign policy considerations have always influenced donors' decisions on aid. Even linking aid to human rights is not new. What is different, though, is the explicit linking of aid to the way political systems are structured.

Defining terms

What, precisely, is meant by the term 'good government'? First, good government is about democracy: open and accountable systems of government where diverse political parties and shades of opinion can flourish. Second, it is about respect for human rights and the rule of law; and third, it is about sound economic and social policies, with expenditure in the unproductive military sector kept to a minimum. (This third criterion has become translated as policies to promote the role of the private sector and individual enterprise in the economy.)

Underlying all this is the belief

that democracy and human rights are valuable in their own right; that sustainable economic development requires a democratic system of government; and that, as it is useless to pour aid into a policy vacuum, it is a legitimate goal of aid to foster all these things.

Demands for political change are coming from within many authoritarian countries. People want it and their choice should be supported. What is more problematic is how aid can best promote this process.

The practical difficulties of implementing a policy linking aid to political reform are obvious. What criteria should be used to measure progress towards good government? In applying economic conditionality, whatever its faults, objective indicators can be used; it is clearly more difficult to measure political indicators.

Clarity and consistency lacking

Lack of clarity about the criteria is likely to lead to confusion about what recipient countries are required to do to attract aid and inevitably leads to accusations that the policy is inconsistently applied. Certainly, when bilateral donors have attempted to make alloca-

tions of aid conditional on human rights, for example, they have not had a good record on consistency, the tendency being to turn a blind eye to the shortcomings of strategically important regimes while penalizing those less strategically significant.

There is also the danger that aid could be used punitively. Countries that do not measure up to acceptable standards could find development aid increasingly difficult to come by and some might have aid withheld altogether. But we should be very clear about what this might involve. When aid is cut off to a developing country because of human rights violations or because its style of government is considered insufficiently open, it is not the political leaders who suffer most — it is the people. Instead of penalizing those who violate human rights, such policies may hit hardest the very people who are excluded from decision-making and whose human rights are being violated.

Testing the assumption

Perhaps the overriding reason why we should be cautious is that the validity of the underlying assumption — namely that democracy promotes sustainable development — is not proven.

An invitation:

First Call for Children would like to ask all readers to speak their minds — in 1,000 words or less — on issues concerning children and development in 'Viewpoint'. Send contributions to the Editor, **First Call for Children**, UNICEF, 3 United Nations Plaza, H-9F, New York, NY 10017. Fax number: (212) 326-7768. The 'Viewpoint' column reflects solely the opinion of the writer.

Undeniably, there is a close relationship between the two, but the link between democracy and improved economic performance is much more complex than is sometimes understood.

Does democracy foster development? If so, then withholding aid to undemocratic regimes may make some sense in certain circumstances. But the evidence of a causal relationship between democracy and development is patchy, to say the least.

What if the reverse were true, that appropriate development fosters democracy? Withholding aid on the grounds that a regime is insufficiently democratic would, therefore, be counter-productive. In fact, there is much to be said for the argument that investment in people, especially in their education, strengthens the foundation of open political systems.

Am I arguing that aid should be free of all political and human rights considerations, that in effect, it should be unconditional? No, rather that political reform should be supported in as positive a manner as possible. And attempts to use aid as a lever would only be met with suspicion and hostility in many countries in which colonial rule is within living memory.

On the other hand, providing special assistance to improve public institutions, support the democratic process and strengthen the legal sector, such as the UK Government's £30 million programme of assistance to good government, can be effective.

What would be even better is if these initiatives were accompanied by measures to ensure that aid is spent on development activities that empower people to take control of their lives, such as literacy, basic health care, income generation, and programmes to enhance the status of women and strengthen the development of grassroots non-governmental organizations.

Yet this is an area in which donors have been reluctant to invest. In fact, the UNICEF *State of the World's Children* 1992 report states that the proportion of the industrialized world's aid which goes directly to meet the needs of the world's poor is only in the region of 10 to 15 per cent.

RESEARCH DIGEST

Spending on family benefits declines

(A short summary of *Government Expenditures for Children and Their Families in Advanced Industrialized Countries, 1960-85*, by Sheila B. Kamerman and Alfred K. Kahn, Innocenti Occasional Papers, Economic Policy Series, number 20.)

Drawing on data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Economic Community (EEC) and on independent comparative research, the paper examines government expenditures on education, health care and family benefits, with a particular focus on family benefits. These last are the cash transfers and tax benefits granted to children and their families, designed to improve economic well-being.

This study finds that, in general, government expenditures for children and their families on education, health care and family benefits climbed from

1960 to 1975, both in dollar terms and as a percentage of GDP, then levelled off between 1975 and 1988.

However, while family benefits gained as a portion of GDP for the first 15 years, their growth rate was much lower than that of social expenditures in general.

In fact, family benefits declined steadily as a portion of social expenditures from 1960 on, never keeping pace with the rate of growth of pensions and health expenditures, but remaining broadly constant in real dollar terms.

As a result, the economic well-being of children remains largely dependent on the earnings and incomes of parents and much less dependent on government income transfers, which have been a major factor in the improved economic well-being of the elderly, for instance.

While the share of children in the total population of OECD countries dropped by 28 per cent between 1960 and 1988, and the share of the elderly rose by almost 30 per cent, the authors conclude that such dramatic demographic changes, although important, do not account entirely for the relative decline of family benefits as a part of total social expenditures.

The stagnation in family benefits is even less understandable from a policy perspective, considering that demand for new benefits — e.g. child support and as an income supplement to the children of single parents, migrants, the working poor, etc. — increased substantially in the past 15 years. It is this lack of social policy that has led to the rise of



From November through December 1991, UNICEF organized a successful aid corridor to the besieged city of Dubrovnik, evacuating 6,400 children and mothers and delivering 3,200 tons of relief commodities. The UNICEF hydrofoil *Krila Dubrovnik* spearheaded the whole operation, involving 13 French and Italian vessels all flying UNICEF flags, when it entered the besieged harbour of Dubrovnik on 14 November with Minister of Immigration Margherita Boniver of Italy, Minister of Humanitarian Affairs Bernard Kouchner of France and Staffan de Mistura of the UNICEF Division of Public Affairs on board. Above, children and mothers disembark from the UNICEF hydrofoil in the safe harbour of Bari, Italy.

the 'new poor', despite the increase in average household incomes during the same period.

The paper shows that trends and patterns in family benefit spending vary from country to country and argues that

such trends largely reflect political choices and decisions. It recommends that family benefits be examined and clarified further and that more goal-oriented family policy strategies be developed.

Convention's links to programmes clearer

UNICEF is rapidly moving to integrally link the Convention on the Rights of the Child to the national programmes of action that countries are preparing to reach the Summit goals for the 1990s and to its own country programmes.

Kul Gautam, UNICEF Director of Planning and Coordination and a member of the UNICEF Consultative Group on Child Rights, says that the Convention on the Rights of the Child can be seen as an umbrella, encompassing the national programmes of action and UNICEF-supported country programmes. "The Convention represents

our best hopes for children, the national programmes of action our best expectations for children, and the country programmes the best support UNICEF can provide."

These are mutually reinforcing, he said, speaking after a meeting of the Consultative Group earlier this year where the new direction emerged. The Convention, timeless and all-inclusive, provides a framework and legal base, while 'time-bound' national programmes of action provide a means for implementing specific goals within the Convention's framework. Country programmes assisted by UNICEF, which are

carried out in a shorter time period than that of national programmes of action and focus on specific sectoral or area projects, in turn help fulfil the more inclusive national programmes of action, and ultimately help make the Convention a reality.

Putting it another way, Mr. Gautam said, "The Convention represents all our aspirations for children. National programmes of action represent all the feasible things a nation can do for its children in the immediate term; and UNICEF's country programmes represent what UNICEF can do in the shorter term to contribute to fulfilling a nation's

programme of action."

All UNICEF cooperation will be developed in this framework, according to Kul Gautam. "We would like to see UNICEF's support for country programmes and the national programmes of action as contributing to the realization of all of the rights of the child."

Guidelines setting out this new approach are going to UNICEF programme officers in country offices. "We want to come out more clearly," he said, "so that the work we are doing in health, nutrition, education and other areas is linked directly to the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

BOOK REVIEW

Protecting Working Children, edited by William E. Myers, UNICEF, New York, 1991. Available also in French and Spanish.

Reviewed by Felicia Knaul Barker

With this collection of articles by researchers, policy makers and service providers, William Myers has successfully outlined a comprehensive strategy for improving the condition of working children. Combining important background material with comprehensive analysis, *Protecting Working Children* is informative for both policy experts and concerned members of the general public. The book goes beyond policy analysis and provides programme administrators and community activists with the tools they need to assist working children effectively. It also makes an important contribution to the debate over whether children should be allowed to work.

The debate focuses on the choice between, on one hand, the complete eradication of child labour and, on the other, the protection of working children. Proponents of the eradication view believe that work of any kind is damaging to children, who should be absorbed in school and play. These proponents contend, therefore, that all forms of child work should be abolished. This book, as is evident from its title, focuses on the protection of the working child, with the caveat that hazardous, exploitative forms of child labour must be eradicated.

This is a practical approach that acknowledges the difficulties in enforcing child labour legislation, by developing a medium-term strategy for the protection of working children. It also, as Mr. Myers points out, is "... a humane attempt to avoid sacrificing a whole generation or more of spunky children while society fumbles with its inner workings."

The articles in the collection are organized in three sections: diagnosis of the problem, implementation of effective actions and evaluation of programme impact. Each section contains examples from numerous countries and regions, as well as from diverse cultural, economic and political realities. The definition of the population of working children is holistic, with authors including in that population street children and child domestic servants.

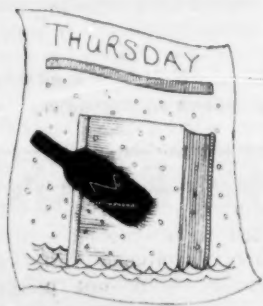
Contribution to methodology

One of the most innovative and unique parts of the book is its discussion of evaluation techniques. This section presents an evaluation methodology developed by a team of investigators in Brazil. Based on findings from initial interviews with street children, the evaluators focus on psychosocial development using social skills, career skills, personal growth and moral values as the four indicators. At the project level, the investigation techniques that they recommend are participant observation;

Diary of a fund-raiser

By Kirsti Westerlund

The Finnish Committee for UNICEF, inspired by the 1990 World Summit for Children, launched an annual fund-raising campaign around the date of Children's Day, celebrated in Finland on the first Monday in October. KIRSTI WESTERLUND, the Committee's Information Officer, chronicles the Committee's campaign in 1991.



The stage and mood were set with the launch of a book, a popular version of the study, *When UNICEF Helped Finland*, written by Hannele Osman, a Committee volunteer. With its glimpse into history, it received good press coverage the next day, catching the imagination of many people, especially those who had received help from UNICEF or who had participated in UNICEF's work.

Morning chores were interrupted by radio stations proclaiming UNICEF's message, with 13 local stations broadcasting challenge programmes, popular among Finnish listeners, to help raise money.



On a challenge programme, people phone in to name their music choice, pledge a sum (in this case in

support of UNICEF) and challenge friends and colleagues to pledge the same amount. The programmes were on the air up to midday, which was only made possible by UNICEF volunteers, who answered phones, wrote down challenges and gave interviews whenever needed.

The main television channel broadcast an interview with Finland's First Lady, Mrs. Tellervo Koivisto, the Committee's patron, who said she was "convinced that assistance reaches the needy in the most reliable way via UNICEF."

At the same time, hundreds of volunteers, including Committee personnel, ran up and down stairs distributing thousands of Children's Day Campaign leaflets to households.

In the evening, students put on their overalls and canvassed the city's restaurants collecting money. (The excursions were preceded, naturally, by telephone calls to all restaurants asking for permission.) Their message was "One pint less, and the money to UNICEF."



Children's Day. Schools that had registered had been sent the Committee's kit on either Niger or Mozambique (the two countries with which the Finnish Committee cooperates).

So there was no limit to the numbers of African villages, wells, food and plays displayed and recreated in schools all over Finland.

People gathered at the marketplace by Helsinki harbour to have a cup of coffee and a bun — proceeds going to the Committee — and to meet the First Lady and Mr. Samir Basta of UNICEF, Geneva, who had taken the time to visit the Committee on this

special occasion.

We were afraid it might rain. We were afraid there might be a frost. But instead the sun was blazing madly and everybody was smiling and shedding layers of warm clothes.

As evening fell, children gathered for candlelight vigils and marched to remind decision makers of children's rights — here and everywhere.



Two hundred school children, 14 years and older, gathered at a forum to discuss the topic. Meetings with different

cultures. The day wasn't long enough for all the questions, all the worries, all the fears of the young.

When it ended, we who had arranged the forum left for home with deep concerns.

What, we wondered, could we give these young people in the form of hope for the future? How could we convince them to actively participate in UNICEF's work as a way to a better future? Because of the forum, we're now putting much more energy into organizing youth sections for our volunteer groups and into including young people as much as possible in the dialogue about the direction the Committee should take in its future work.

AFTERWARDS: As to money, 2 million Finnmarks (about US\$500,000) were raised, 10 per cent of which came from schools, 50 per cent from radio contributions and the rest from collection boxes.

As to emotions, in this shared effort for the children of the world, we worked ourselves sick, we laughed, we cried. And we're doing it again next autumn.

mixed observation; drawing and painting; life histories; conversations and unobtrusive observation. Evaluators also noted that important techniques developed spontaneously, such as the children's use of mime to convey information about their lives before and after their exposure to the programme.

Thus, this section provides concrete information and a methodology for conducting evaluations — a skill notoriously absent from many programmes for street and working children. Furthermore, it focuses on the practical and the possible, with the realization that small projects are often financially pressed and understaffed. As this is truly ground-breaking work, it is not surprising that the authors were able to develop and test only appropriate psychosocial indicators. It is clear, however, that there is a need to repeat the exercise and

develop appropriate indicators along dimensions such as economic self-sufficiency and educational achievement.

Research and cooperation

Protecting Working Children recommends several directions for future efforts on behalf of working children. Further research on the situation and numbers of working children is needed. At present, the lack of comprehensive, cross-country data hampers the development of targeted programmes.

Taken as a whole, the articles in this book imply a specific strategy for assisting working children, which includes a role for advocates from all levels — policy makers, researchers and direct-service providers. Through the use of concrete examples, the book goes beyond the theoretical and shows how effective integration can be achieved in

practice. Cooperation is a central message of the book, and one which deserves attention.

A number of the authors stress the promotion of 'self-advocacy' among working children, whose strengths are well documented through examples from several countries, most notably Brazil. Although many programmes recognize the importance of allowing children to advocate on their own behalf, few have been able to ensure that children are an integral part of the planning process. These findings offer a final recommendation: perhaps one of the best ways to protect working children is to help them to protect themselves.

Felicia Knaul Barker, a Fellow at the Harvard Centre for Population and Development Studies, has done research on working and street children in Latin America.

NEWS BRIEFS

NEW SCHOOL STRATEGIES IN SENEGAL: To overhaul an educational system plagued by high drop-out and failure rates, Senegal is introducing some 2,600 pilot schools where new educational strategies can be tried. Double-flow classes of 50 to 55 children each have already been started; teachers spend 20 hours per week with each class. As a result, 140,000 more pupils are now able to attend school.

ORS STEMS CHOLERA DEATHS: The World Health Organization (WHO) says that over 500,000 cases of cholera were reported in 1991, more than in the past five years combined, with more than 16,700 deaths attributed to the disease. Control measures in Latin America succeeded in keeping the proportion of fatal cases low. In Peru, for instance, where nearly 300,000 cholera cases were reported, the fatality rate was 0.67 per cent, one of the lowest ever recorded in a cholera outbreak, due largely to the country's extensive use of oral rehydration salts (ORS). In Africa, where ORS use rates are lower, the pandemic caused fatality rates of 8 per cent or more in nine countries.

FEMALE CHILDREN AT RISK: A study in the newsletter of the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research in Bangladesh found that higher levels of maternal education alone will not guarantee good care for female children. Following more than 7,000 live births reported in 1982, the researchers found that the predicted risk of dying for male children whose mothers had between one and five years of education was 45 per cent lower than that of infants whose mothers had no education. The predicted risk for female infants of mothers with between one and five years of education, however, was only 7 per cent lower than that of infants whose mothers were uneducated. Among children whose mothers had six or more years of education, the risk of dying was reduced by 70 per cent for boys, but only 32 per cent for girls.

BRAZIL'S PACT: Pact for Children, a coalition of Brazilian governmental and non-governmental groups that helped win ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, has recently called for a meeting of Brazil's state governors to draw up a plan of action for child protection and development and to monitor progress on children's rights. Committed to providing children the full protection of laws ensuring their welfare, the Pact has worked on behalf of children serving prison sentences and is also active in helping devise ways to contain violence against children. Particularly at risk are the country's approximately 5 million children living on the streets, a growing number of whom have been murdered in recent years, reputedly by death squads out to 'clean up' Brazil's streets.

LITERACY GOAL: Street theatre, marches and intensive instruction are the ingredients in New Delhi's drive to reach full literacy by the end of 1994. The campaign by the Delhi Literacy Committee, supervised by India's five-year-old National Literacy Mission, started in September last year, with 6,000 volunteers, mainly housewives and school-goers, who were trained to teach adults by master trainers. In turn, they will help 60,000 illiterate adults learn to read, write and do simple arithmetic, providing individual learners with 180 hours of instruction over a six-to-eight-month period. To achieve the goal of full literacy approximately 2.5 million of New Delhi's 9 million people will have to be reached. (IPS).

MATERNAL RISK CONFERENCE: To help spur efforts to reach the Summit goal of halving maternal mortality and morbidity by the year 2000, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF, the Pan American Health Organization and the World Bank sponsored a conference on risk-free maternity in Guatemala City in February, with experts from seven

Central American countries attending. Women in the region face one chance in 80 of dying from maternity-related causes, according to UNFPA sources, while women in developed countries face one chance in 1,000.

NETWORKING GLOBALLY: UNICEF joined 19 international NGOs and inter-governmental bodies to create 'Project Global 2000', a worldwide citizens' movement focusing on the environment, economic development and disarmament for the decade. Among the regional conferences the Project plans are one in North America and one in Europe later this year; and in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East in 1993.

DECLARATION ADOPTED AT SUMMIT ON RURAL WOMEN: With the goal of improving lives of poor rural women, some 90 wives of heads of State or Government attended a conference in Geneva in February, sponsored by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Senior UN officials also attended, including the Secretary-General and the heads of WHO, UNICEF and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The conference declaration "noted" that up to 90 per cent of rural women in developing countries rely on the land for their livelihood, and it called for measures to lessen the chronic poverty in which many of them live. These include greater resource allocations and improved access to them for women, improved training, opportunities for rural women to be involved in the planning of development programmes and legislation ensuring women's ability to own land.

WATER AS 'ECONOMIC GOOD': More than 300 water experts from 113 countries attended the International Conference on Water and the Environment in Dublin in January. The experts issued the 'Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development', based on four guiding principles, at the end of the week-long, UN-sponsored meeting, concluding: that fresh water is "a valuable resource, essential to sustain life"; that "water development and management should be based on a participatory approach"; that "women play a central part in providing, managing and safeguarding water"; and that "water has an economic value in all its competing uses and should be recognized as an economic good." The last raised concern among some participants who feared that it would hurt the world's poorest. In the end, the conference made several guarantees about safeguarding the poor whenever water pricing practices are enacted.

JAPANESE GIRL WINS PEACE POSTER PRIZE: Yuki Nakajima, a 12-year-old from Miki, Japan, won the fourth annual Lions' International Peace Poster Contest. Approximately 300,000 children between 11 and 13 years old from 62 countries participated. Nakajima's poster depicts children from many nations in a field of daisies releasing a flock of doves. The doves rise to meet a large balloon symbolizing the United Nations.

SOAPBERRY SAGA: What began as a rather routine data collection exercise in 1964 has emerged as scientific triumph for Aklile Lemma and a health boon for millions of people suffering from schistosomiasis.

It began when Lemma — currently the UNICEF representative in Kampala — was studying the distribution of schistosome-transmitting snails in a small stream near Adwa, in northern Ethiopia. Although snails were thriving in most parts of the stream, immediately below where women did their laundry there were dead snails. Enquiries led to

the information that the women washed with a detergent made locally from dried and powdered berries of the soapberry plant, known in Ethiopia as *endod*.

Lemma conducted a five-year pilot control trial that found with *endod* use, overall prevalence of schistosomiasis dropped from 63 to 34 per cent, a significant decrease, but one reflecting many chronic, incurable cases of schistosomiasis in the older population. Among children from one to five years old, however, the incidence of schistosomiasis dropped dramatically from 50 per cent to just 7 per cent. And the price was right: the cost of snail control for the test area's 17,000 people was 10 US cents per person per year.

Despite these promising results, it has taken Lemma nearly 20 years to get the approval that he needed to win funding for further tests. Lemma's work was finally recognized when he and Dr. Legesse Wolde-Yohannes received the Right Livelihood Award, sometimes referred to as the 'Alternative Nobel Prize'. The award cited the pair's "first-rate scientific skills" and applauded them for their persistence "in working to overcome the biases against Third World science in the Western medical establishment." Funding for further research into *endod* has come from Canada's International Development Research Centre. (Adapted from an article in *Ceres*, No. 130.)

FIRST PRIZE — HEALTHY BABIES: Mothers and children are big winners in

a series of baby contests organized by the Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana and Ghana's Ministry of Health. The Association came up with the idea to encourage mothers to bring their children for immunizations during campaigns in target areas.

To enter their children in the contest, mothers have to show that they had two doses of tetanus vaccine during pregnancy. They also have to prove they know how to give first aid at home and to administer oral rehydration therapy. In addition, a mother is required to know about birth spacing, environmental sanitation and personal hygiene, and to be able to prepare a nutritionally sound weaning food called Weanimix, made from a mixture of high-protein grains and legumes.

ECUADOR PLANTS USEFUL TREE: Ecuador's Ministry of Agriculture is growing an Indian tree called the *neem* (*melia Azadirachta*) and offering it to farmers throughout the country.

Research credits the tree with great versatility: its bark reportedly combats fevers, skin diseases and malaria and is an antidote to snake and scorpion bites. Its leaves fight skin boils and its juices, mixed with salt, can help eliminate parasites in humans. Studies have shown that the seed contains an oil used in treating rheumatism, syphilis and leprosy and is also an excellent fertilizer for other plants. (IPS)

QUOTABLE: "If we could make family planning services available to all women who want them, 25 per cent or more of maternal deaths could be prevented." Dr. Nafis Sadik, UNFPA Executive Director, quoted in *Safe Motherhood*, Issue 7, Nov. 1991-Feb. 1992.

EVENTS AND MEETINGS

April		
April-Oct.	Seville	EXPO 92
6-10	Yaoundé, Cameroon	International Workshop on Child Development and National Development in Africa
7	Global	World Health Day (WHO)
May		
8	—	International Planned Parenthood Federation 'Flowers for Mothers' Event
9-14	Vancouver	World Organization of Family Physicians Annual Conference
13-16	Bergen, Norway	International Conference on Children at Risk
18-22	Lisbon	UNICEF National Committees Annual Meeting
18-30	Rio de Janeiro	World Conference of Indigenous Peoples on Environment and Development
28-29	Curitiba, Brazil	World Urban Forum
27 May - 4 June	Munich	Prix Jeunesse Internationale
June		
1-12	Rio de Janeiro	The Earth Summit — UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and '92 Global Forum (NGOs)
2-8	Rio de Janeiro	Global Youth Summit
5	Global	World Environment Day (UNEP)
5-7	Rio de Janeiro	Parliamentary Earth Summit
10	Rio de Janeiro	International Children's Hearing
15-17	Atlanta	International Conference on Child Day Care Health
15-26	New York	UNICEF Executive Board Meeting
16	Global	Day of the African Child
24	Catalonia	Cincoet/Torch Run in Spain
26	Global	International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

— (Venue unavailable)

FOR SALE:

Children's bodies and souls

Editor's note: The sexual exploitation of children is a problem of immense scope and depth, demanding urgent attention. Touching more than a million children worldwide, violating every human right as well as most national and international laws, the issue is still underreported, even unacknowledged in too many countries. In the hope that more national and international NGOs will add their voices to those already working in the field, NGO Action for Children has given more space than usual to its lead story.

By Sara Ann Friedman

In 1987, a 13-year-old Philippine girl was killed by a European tourist when an electric vibrator broke inside her body and she bled to death. The tourist was acquitted on a technicality.

In the raid of a Bangkok brothel, Thai police rescued 18 girls ages 14-19. Seventeen tested HIV-positive. According to a health worker who interviewed the girls, fewer than half the customers wore condoms, each girl was servicing 17 men a night and receiving the equivalent of US\$0.80 per customer.

The parents of an 11-year-old girl from the Taiwan mountain provinces were paid by a policeman's wife to allow their daughter to go to the city. Lured to the house of a 'cousin', she was forcibly injected with hormones to trigger menstruation and the next day began receiving customers. Her family wanted to buy her back but could not find her until the young girl had been sold many times to different brothels.

These are but three of the thousands of documented cases of children as young as age five in many developing countries who are lured, abducted, 'adopted' or sold by their families into brothels for prostitution and pornography, to serve the increasing demands of tourists and organized sex tours from industrialized countries.

Since the growth of tourism during the 1970s, child advocates have noted with alarm the explosion of child prostitution into a multi-million dollar international industry. As field workers have observed, whole villages are bereft of young girls, with children taken from their homes by force or false promises and illegally transported across many borders to prison-like brothels in dozens of Asian cities and 'adopted homes' in the industrialized countries of Europe

and North America. The worsening situation affecting younger and younger victims has prompted a new international campaign, and several governments, including Germany and Thailand, plan to take stronger action against those who trade in the bodies and souls of children.

A new campaign

Joint NGO activity, spearheaded by an international campaign and coalition, End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT), is calling for the end of tourism-related prostitution in four Asian countries — Thailand, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Taiwan — by 1993. "The time has come," says Ron O'Grady, New Zealand clergyman and coordinator of ECPAT, "for concerted action among NGOs, churches and the rest of the world to create the necessary moral outrage that will change attitudes, pass new laws and enforce existing legislation. No society can go on destroying children in such large numbers."

Common causes

NGOs working in the field have pointed to deepening economic and social problems that make solutions to the problem both more elusive and more urgent. Increasing urbanization, accompanied by the breakdown of family support systems and rising family violence, wider economic divisions between North and South and links among poverty, debt service and tourism, are some of the complex forces conspiring to thrust these children into a world they cannot cope with, a world eager to exploit and abuse them. But the problem is not confined to tourism, or to Asia. It is a problem of immense proportions, involving local men on many levels, touching every sector of the world — urban and rural, North and South.



"No society can go on destroying children in such large numbers."

A human rights issue

In November 1991, an African regional conference, 'Culture, Sex and Money: Its Effects on Women and Children,' was held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, sponsored by the International Abolitionist Federation (IAF), the International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB) and Environmental Development Action in the Third World (ENDA). The Conference stressed the human rights aspect of child prostitution, with participants urging governments that have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child to

implement their commitments, and those that have not ratified it to be pressured to do so.

A report published in 1989 by Redd Barna (Norwegian Save the Children), *The Sexual Exploitation of Young Children in Developing Countries*, describes child prostitution as "the worst form of exploitation ... an outright attack on the most fundamental rights of a human being: the right to decide over his/her own body, own health, own mind."

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CHILD PROSTITUTION

The global toll

"One million children are forced into the sex market every year." (Report from the Norwegian Government to the UN Working Group on Slavery, 1989)

Numbers do not tell the whole story, but they are an important indicator of the scope of the problem. However, an accurate accounting of the number of children involved in prostitution is impossible to obtain. Illegal in most countries, sexual traffic in children is largely conducted through highly organized underground channels, so official figures and field estimates vary widely.

The following estimates have been culled from various reports, institutions and social agencies through interviews, observation and official sources. They do not include the millions of children at risk because of family violence, poverty and abandonment, or the children of prostitutes.

In Thailand, the National Youth Bureau, in 1989, claimed the number of child prostitutes was 2,500. Voluntary

agencies, Friends of Women and The Center for Protection of Children's Rights in Thailand suggest the number is 200,000 to 400,000 prostitutes under age 16 who work in 60,000 brothels.

In Sri Lanka child prostitution was virtually unknown before the 1970s. Today, in a country where girls are still carefully guarded until marriage, boys aged 6-14 have become victims of international paedophiles. Official estimates of 'beach boys' engaged in prostitution are 2,000; child advocate researchers estimate more than 10,000.

In the Philippines, NGO estimates place the number of child prostitutes in Manila today around 40,000, twice UNICEF figures from 1987. In tourist areas and towns near the American military base in Olongapo they estimate 25,000 more. During the 1980s, 15 cases of sexual abuse of children aged 11-16 and 82 cases of abuse of young women over age 15 were filed against US servicemen. All were dismissed.

In Taiwan 80 per cent of the prostitutes are drawn from 2 per cent of the population, as an estimated 30,000 indigenous women and girls are lured from their home villages in the mountain provinces by promises of a 'good life'.

India has the largest incidence of child prostitution in the world. According to the Indian Journal of Social Work, 20 per cent of the estimated 1 million prostitutes in Bombay alone are minors. In addition to brothel prostitutes, many thousands of pre-puberty lower caste girls throughout India are dedicated annually as temple prostitutes, and the more than 400,000 young girls employed as domestic workers are at special risk of sexual abuse and exploitation.

ChildHope reports there are 500,000 street children in Brazil, many of whom are engaged in prostitution.

Child pornography, another facet of sexual exploitation, exists in all countries where there is child prostitution and, according to the 1989 Redd Barna report, it is the same children who are involved. The report says: "The USA and Europe are the prime markets for child pornography. It is claimed there are about 500,000 paedophiles in the USA and that they represent 85 per cent of the consumers of all pornography produced."

Field responses: "They are the best teachers"

By Meg Gardinier

"If you don't believe that God loves these children — you'll quit." — Sister Myrna Tarcadon, Caritas, Philippines

Article 39 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child provides that: "State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse ... Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child."

The question of whether a child who has been sold or forced into prostitution, one of the most physically, emotionally and spiritually degrading forms of exploitation, can be rehabilitated is painful and controversial. "When you speak of the constant trauma of girls 14 and 15 servicing 30 customers a night, 30 nights a month," says

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NGO Action for Children

FOR SALE:

Children's bodies and souls

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The AIDS factor

The problem has been most recently exacerbated by AIDS, as men seek younger and younger girls, especially virgins. Paradoxically, it may also be the AIDS crisis — already devastating Africa — now on the doorstep of Asia that has prompted some governments to acknowledge the huge scope of the problem. The Thai Government has just passed legislation to stiffen penalties for perpetrators and will actively participate in ECPAT's first international conference, being held in April 1992 in Bangkok.

Making the laws work

Many observers are sceptical about law enforcement — present or future. Illegal under almost every national law, and outlawed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, sexual exploitation of children is denied by officials and winked at by local enforcement officers. Researchers are threatened by organized crime elements, reluctant to relinquish their hold over such a profitable enterprise. Many governments, anxious to develop tourism, are unwilling to touch foreigners, including military personnel, who commit crimes in their country. In 1988, the United States Investigative Services mounted an undercover investiga-

tion of reported child prostitution rings in Olangapo City, Philippines. The official report was never released, but a copy found its way to the PREDA Foundation, where Father Shay Allen reported that agents were offered children as young as four and five.

ECPAT has offices in 13 countries, including several 'sender' countries where the primary demand for children originates: Australia, Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland, the USA.

Germany, a major source of European tourism to Southeast Asia, has taken the lead in cracking down on the worst excesses of sex tourism. The Government has recently passed legislation that will make punishable in Germany the abuse by any German citizen in any country of a child of any nationality.

For information about ECPAT, contact: ECPAT, P.O. Box 178, Klong-cha, Bangkok 10240, Thailand; in North America, North America Coordinating Center for Responsible Tourism, P.O. Box 827, San Anselmo, CA 94979. Other NGOs working on this issue: Redd Barna, Oslo, Norway (see page 15), ICCB, Geneva, Switzerland (see page 15) and the International Abolitionist Federation, Kahlenberger Strasse 61/9, A-1190, Vienna, Austria. Tel: 431373579.

Upcoming conferences and events

— An international festival, *Children at Play*, will take place in Craiova, Romania, from 14 to 18 May 1992. Initiated and sponsored by Salvati Copili — Dolj (Save the Children, Romania) and Red Barnet (Save the Children, Denmark), the festival will feature films, drawing, photography and other artwork made by handicapped children from Romania and several other European countries, as well as games and programmes chosen by the children.

The goals of the festival are to make the Romanian public understand the social difficulties endured by handicapped children, and to provide these children with direct contact with children from other countries who have the same handicaps. The festival will take place at the National Theatre, the 'Oitenia' Philharmonic Hall and the Puppet Theatre of Craiova. Up to 1,000 hotel spaces will be available for visitors. For information contact: Constantin Orheiu or Georgeta Domozina, Salvati Copili — Dolj, Str. Unirii nr. 118, etaj 1, 1100 Craiova, Romania. Tel: 40 412 4281.

— Working for All Children: Their Survival, Protection and Development, the 20th World Congress of the World Organization for Early Childhood Education (OMEPE) will be held in Mesa-Flagstaff, Arizona, 2-7 August 1992. 60 countries will be represented. Low conference rates, inexpensive housing and meals. Contact: OMEPE, c/o Mesa Convention Bureau, 120 North Centre

Street, Mesa, AZ 85201.

— The Fourth International Congress of Defense for Children International (DCI) entitled *Policies for Children: Participation and Cooperation*, will be held in Granada, Spain, on 22-24 June 1992. The workshops and lectures will focus on the impact of social and economic policies on children's lives, children's rights within the context of international law, and facilitation of children's participation in defence and protection of their own rights. Registration fee is US\$200. For information contact: DCI, P.O. Box 88, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland. Tel: 41 22 734 05 58; Fax: 41 22 740 11 45.

— A major conference on children's rights, co-hosted by the UK Committee on UNICEF with Save the Children UK and the University of Glasgow, will be held in Glasgow from 22 to 24 September 1992.

Entitled *Justice for Children*, the issues to be discussed will be the Convention on the Rights of the Child, childhood and citizenship, the notion of children's rights, social justice and childhood, policy-making and children and models of juvenile justice. The conference will be of interest to academics, lawyers, magistrates, policymakers, practitioners and others with an interest in children's rights.

For information please contact: Gillian Wilcox, UNICEF UK, 65 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3NB, telephone: 071-405 5592, fax: 071-405 2332.

Youth leading the way

By Gabrielle Bahr

The Convention

Since its initial Roundtable meeting, preceding the 1989 World Summit for Children, the Youth NGO World Initiative for Children has been transforming its commitment into concrete projects. (See *Action for Children*, Vol. VI, No. 1 and *First Call for Children* January-February 1992, P.12 for information on the Action Kit.) More recently its activities have focused on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Top priority was a series of activities to make children aware of their rights in age-appropriate language and expression. Radda Barnen (Swedish *Save the Children*) organized drama exercises for children with professional teachers, to help children understand the contents of the Convention. They feel that children must understand "in their heart that the Convention is theirs."

Health and Education Initiatives

The YMCA in Bombay, India, has established basic education centres for slum and street children with night study programmes. The centres also serve as contact points with families, making it possible to address other needs such as nutrition and health care.

The Kenya Scouts Association launched a health initiative on child immunization, publishing a brochure called *Joint Immunization Programme* and enclosing an immunization badge to be earned by each scout who gathers information on local child immunization services and passes it on to at least 10 mothers.

Gabrielle Bahr is NGO Public Affairs Assistant to UNICEF, Geneva. For more information on Youth NGO Initiative contact: Gabrielle Bahr, NGO Office, UNICEF, Palais des Nations, CH-1211, Geneva 10, Switzerland.

Youth '92: Taking a stand at UNCED

As the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) fast approaches, a coalition of youth groups is working hard to

coalition of youth groups is working hard to ensure that it is both seen and heard at this important meeting to be held in Brazil in June 1992.

A World Youth Preparatory Forum was held in San Jose, Costa Rica, on 22-29 March 1992, where 250 youth delegates from around the world shared their ideas and visions. The Forum was organized by Costa Rican and Canadian Youth in consultation with an International Youth Committee of representatives from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas.

"Young people throughout the world today are growing up with the devastating knowledge that ours is a planet in crisis," says Colleen Duggan, of the Canadian Youth '92 Secretariat and a Forum organizer. As inheritors of that crisis, "youth input is a must," she adds.

Supporting "sustainable development" as a "means to global peace and survival," Youth '92 is stepping into the sharp debate between North and South, macro-conservationist and development perspectives, NGOs, governments and multilateral agencies. Youth '92 is working to eliminate potential divisions in its own North/South partnership between Canada and Costa Rica and within the Canadian Youth Working Group.

Organized specifically for the Brazil conference, the coalition's goal is not only to affect decisions at UNCED and beyond, but to develop leadership skills and build bridges to other sectors that will create strong and sophisticated political lobbies. In these final months before the Brazil conference, youth groups worldwide have been organizing national and regional preparatory consultations to educate themselves on the issues, define national youth positions, coordinate actions, identify delegates for the Costa Rican conference and prepare for the 4th PrepCom in New York from 2 March to 3 April 1992. The Asian Student Association is holding an event on environment and development in Malaysia in April 1992.

Committed to broad participation with-

in the Forum, organizers are taking great care to include youth from small community-based environment and development groups, non-students, aboriginal youth and women. "This is an experiment," said Ms. Duggan, "driven by youth, for youth. We make careful plans and we just go along from day to day, learning as we go."

For information contact: Youth '92 Secretariat, 55 Parkdale Ave., Ottawa, ON, Canada, K1Y 1E5. Tel: 613/761-9206.

Children's Hearings on Environment Held in UK

In 35 countries, people under age 18 are voicing their views about environment and development to people in positions of power. In hundreds of panels young people are putting questions and demands to panels of adults — teachers, politicians, business people and other leaders.

The Save the Children Fund, World Wide Fund for Nature and UNICEF UK have produced an action pack to help young people hold these Children's Hearings in their schools and clubs.

Young people can also feed their opinions to a UK Children's Charter by sending

voice of the children

United Kingdom Children's Hearings



Say It Loud
Speak Out for the Future

Save the Children Y UNICEF UK

postcards, tapes, drawings and poems to the address below. The charter will go to UNCED in June 1992 in Brazil.

For an action pack or to give views: contact UK Children's Hearings, P.O. Box 759, London SE9 8SA, England.

China passes first law of protection for youth

Adopted at the Standing Committee of the 7th National People's Congress on September 1991, China's First Law of Protection for Youth came into effect on 1 January 1992. The law stipulates that families, schools, society and the judicial departments shall be responsible for protecting youth. It has provisions to the effect that parents and patrons shall not maltreat or abandon youth, organizations and individuals shall not employ

teenagers under the age of 16, and dissemination among youth of any books, publications and audio-visual materials containing contents of obscenity, murder, violence and terror shall be strictly forbidden. The law provides legal protection for the legitimate rights and interests of citizens below the age of 18 and ensures their healthy development morally, mentally and physically. (ACYF Information)

CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Involving children in their own rights

Successful learning takes place in many environments, formal and informal, in school, place of worship and at home. The Working Group on the Convention on the Rights of the Child believes that for the Convention to have real meaning, children must be aware of their own rights. The following article was prepared by a subcommittee of the NGO Working Group on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It suggests ways in which adults can inform and involve children in promoting those rights.

A discussion of three simple questions helps young children understand the concept of rights and can lead to a discussion of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

1. What do you **need** to live a good life?
2. What are the differences between the things you **need** and the things you **want**?
3. Given what **you** need, what do you think **all kids** need?

For older children, the Convention offers a logical framework for introducing all categories of rights — civil, political, social, economic and cultural — in the context of a global society. The Convention provides a valuable lesson on the worthwhile outcome of the efforts of a consensus of peoples of many differing races, creeds and ideologies.

Any group can act as a model society in which children can determine the rights of all members and define the responsible actions that must be taken to protect these rights. Understanding the relationship between those responsibilities, roles and rights enables children to see themselves as both

the beneficiaries of their rights and the providers and protectors of rights for other children.

After a discussion of rights, some children may feel responsible for the problems of less fortunate children. It should be made clear that responsibility for the realization of rights belongs to society as a whole. As

group in a spirit of understanding, tolerance and cooperation.

Working together to effect change

Empowered with an understanding of their rights, children need a means to act upon their new-found knowledge. Assist them to create their own initiatives to ensure the

You can help children understand that the political system will be changed most constructively by working from the bottom up. Encourage them to work towards attainable goals together with other children and adults. Making the world a better place for children is a shared responsibility that requires many people working on many levels in many different ways.

Children can share their knowledge about rights with other children through a school assembly, a musical performance, an art exhibit or a letter-writing campaign. Encourage them to ask questions and talk with their families about children's rights.

Modelling the spirit of the Convention

Special events or programmes should model the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children should not be used to promote children's rights; they should be informed, willing and active participants — not tokens, props or attendants.

For information on what kids are doing to promote their rights, available curricula and resource materials contact: **The Children's Piece**, c/o Coalition for Peace, West-end ISO Bldg., Social Development Complex, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, 1108 Quezon City, Philippines; **Kids Meeting Kids**, 380 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10025, USA; **Amnesty International USA**,

Human Rights Education Programme, 53 West Jackson, Room 1162, Chicago, IL 60604, USA; **Defence for Children International-USA**, 210 Forsythe St., New York, NY 10002, USA; **US Committee for UNICEF**, 333 E. 38th Street, New York, NY 10016, USA.



Children have the right to play...



We have the right not to be separated from our parents.



I am a child and I have the right not to be attacked.



I am a child and I have the right to be cared for.

well, children who have been denied their rights should understand that they are not responsible for their own circumstances.

In any discussion with children about rights, it is important to present the information in a manner that respects the rights, dignity and differences of the children in the

rights of children.

Kids may want to design a neighbourhood, community or school project to help other children with greater needs. Encourage them to carry out such projects in a spirit of **social justice** — not as expressions of **charity**.

"They are the best teachers"

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Ron O'Grady, Coordinator of End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT), "you cannot speak of rehabilitation."

Rehabilitation is not synonymous with healing," says Florence Bruce, Project Coordinator Officer of the International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB). "There are always traces of psychological and social wounds. But if rehabilitation means leaving prostitution for a better life, it can happen."

Keeping alive the hope that it can happen are thousands of field workers in every country where child prostitution exists, committed individuals working year after year, often silently and against high odds of failure (in most cases as high as 80 per cent). They work with children who are suicidal, listless and resistant. One young adolescent girl, when asked by Good Shepherd Sister Michelle Lopez for her single greatest wish, replied, "I wish I had never been born."

In 1991 ICCB published *The Sexual Exploitation of Children: Field Responses*, a compendium describing 50 projects in four continents as a testament to these efforts, and as a service and inspiration to others. Established to provide alternatives for children forced or lured into prostitution, these programmes provide vocational skills, medical and legal services, education and the spiritual dignity of the child. "Creating relationships and communication has proved more important in the long term

than the provision of services and programmes," says Florence Bruce, report editor.

Representing a small sampling of the work being done in the field, the publication provides a descriptive account of each project, including the number and type of children assisted, activities, evaluation and resources. A few of their experiences and testimonies follow.

The Childhood for Children Project is a residential child-care programme of the PREDA Human Development Centre located in Olongapo, Philippines. The project was initiated in 1989 in response to the growing number of poor children who had been abused by tourists or by US sailors from the nearby military base. Directors of the programme, Father Shay Cullen and Mr. Alex Hermoso, explain the struggles involved in caring for children who have been so profoundly exploited: "It is difficult to enter the world of the street child, and we can only do so by listening to them. They carry the burdens of having been abused. They are the best teachers."

The Domestic Workers Movement in Bombay, India, reaches out to 12,000 domestic workers, 4,000 of whom are children age 9-18. The programme provides vocational training, health care and education, psychological support and leadership training. Says Sister Jeanne Devos, project director: "They come to our programme forced by hunger or in search of a job. There are tens of thousands of them. They are 'the girl', or 'the servant' or 'the prostitute'. Yet they do have names of their own. And their own stories. Beautiful stories and stories sorrowful, pitiful and heart-

rending. Sharing with them, I experience them as a gift. They change us."

Sister Michelle Lopez is a Good Shepherd Sister from the **Fountain of Good Life Centre**, in Pattaya, Thailand, which tries to build up both the girls' self-esteem and sense of self-worth as well as offering education and training in skills. She says: "Children who come to our programme have dropped out of school and enter prostitution to pay off their parents' debts. When they send home money earned from prostitution, the girls get a sense of affirmation because they have been able to help their parents. The girls often tell me, 'My body is bad, my soul is good...' It is true that we have had our failures. But I have observed that children who experience unconditional acceptance, respect, patience and trust stand a better chance of making it on their own."

Meg Gardiner is Director of ICCB, USA.

Further Reading:

Caught in Modern Slavery, published by the Ecumenical Council on Third World Tourism (ECTWT), Bangkok.

A report on the Consultation on Tourism and Child Prostitution in Asia held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, 11-15 May 1990, which led to the formation of ECPAT. It contains the full text of the conference decisions and the addresses of conference participants. The publication is available from: ECTWT, P.O. Box 24, Chorakhebu, Bangkok 10230, Thailand. Cost: US\$10.

The Sexual Exploitation of Children in

Developing Countries, by Ove Narvesen, published by Redd Bama (Norwegian Save the Children).

Thoughtful and well-researched, the 75-page publication examines the problem of sexual exploitation of children against a background of poverty and urbanization, family break-up, machismo, tourism and commercialization, religious and cultural traditions. It focuses on three countries in three different continents: the Philippines, Kenya and Peru.

The book is available from Redd Bama, Postboks 6200, Etterstad, 0602, Oslo 6, Norway. Fax: 472674884; telephone: 472570080. Postage only: US\$5.

NGO Action for Children

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RESOURCES

UNICEF Publications

Available for sale from
UNICEF
RPPL, H-12G
3 UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA.

Women, Work and the Need for Child Care — Opportunities for programme collaboration: A review of UNICEF-supported programmes in Nepal, Ecuador and Ethiopia. Edited by Cassie Landers and Ann Leonard. Staff Working Paper No. 10. 89 pp. UNICEF, New York, 1992. US\$8.95.

Available without charge from your nearest UNICEF office or from UNICEF, H-9F, at the above address.

Take the Baby-friendly Initiative! A global effort with hospitals, health services and parents to breastfeed babies for the best start in life. Also in French, Spanish. Brochure.

A Human-centred Strategy for Environmental Improvement: The Children's Dimension. Statement by Richard Jolly to the third session of the Preparatory Committee of the UN Conference on the Envi-

ronment and Development, 28 August 1991. Brochure.

Report on a Meeting about AIDS and Orphans in Africa, 14-15 June 1991, Florence. by Maggie Black. Booklet.

UNICEF Audiopacks. A trilingual leaflet on three radio programmes: *No Life for a Child, Giving Children a Future and Women and Children with AIDS.*

Available from the International Child Development Centre, Spedale degli Innocenti, Piazza SS Annunziata 12, 50122, Florence, Italy:

The Convention: Child Rights and UNICEF Experience at the Country Level. This booklet gives examples from Bolivia, Kenya and Brazil. US\$6. Other country studies will follow.

Historical Perspectives on Breastfeeding. Two essays by Sara F. Matthews Grieco and Carlo A. Corsini.

Innocenti Occasional Papers:

Patterns of Government Expenditures in Developing Countries During the 1980s: The Impact on Social Services, by Beth Ebel. July 1991. US\$6.

Ecuador: Crisis, Adjustment and Social Policy in the 1980s, by the Ecuadorian Centre of Social Research. August 1991. US\$6.

Government Expenditures for Children and Their Families in Advanced Industrialized Countries: 1960-85. By Sheila B. Kamerman and Alfred J. Kahn. September 1991. US\$6.

Is Adjustment Conducive to Long-term Development? The Case of Africa in the 1980s, by Giovanni Andrea Cornia. October 1991. US\$6.

Other Publications

Infant and Child Nutrition Worldwide: Issues and Perspectives, edited by Frank Falkner. CRS Press Inc., 2000 Corporate Blvd NW, Boca Raton, FL 33431, USA. Hardcover US\$39.95, plus shipping/handling US\$6.95. (ISBN 0-8493-8814-7)

Child Mortality in Developing Countries: Socio-economic Differentials, Trends and Implications, by the UN Population Division with support from the UN Population Fund. US\$17.50, from Population Division, United Nations, Room DC2-1960, 2 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA.

Children of the Cities, by Jo Boyden and Pat Holden, on the plight of urban children. Zed Books Ltd, 57 Caledonian Road, London N1 9BU, UK. Hardcover US\$49.95/£29.95 (ISBN 0-86232-956-6) Paperback US\$17.50/£10.95 (ISBN 0-86232-957-4)

UNICEF Videos

A number of audiovisual materials are available from UNICEF offices and National Committees. (Check with your local office for other titles.)

When the Bough Breaks — 52 minutes. UNICEF/Television Trust for the Environment video co-production on how children are affected by changes in the environment. 1990. (No. 255)

Breastfeeding Rediscovered — 31 minutes. Film and video, with guidebook. Also in French, Portuguese, Spanish. 1985. (No. 192)

Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative — 7.58 minutes. Video. Also in French, Spanish. 1991. (No. 258)

Angola: the Transition — 13 minutes. Video. UNICEF/TPA coproduction on the rebuilding of a country left torn by civil war. 1992. (No. 257)

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